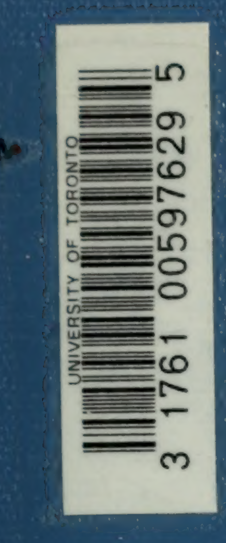

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THE TABLE-TALK OF A MESOPOTAMIAN JUDGE

ORIENTAL TRANSLATION FUND

NEW SERIES

VOL. XXVIII

THE TABLE-TALK OF A MESOPOTAMIAN JUDGE

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL ARABIC BY

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74 GROSVENOR STREET, LONDON, W.1.

1922

PREFACE

THE author of this work, al-Mu*h*assin son of 'Alī son of Mohammed son of Dāwūd of the tribe Tanūkh, figures occasionally in the Chronicles called *The Eclipse of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate*, but not so frequently as his father, 'Alī, to whom there are several allusions in this book. There is a collection of anecdotes about him in Yāqūt's *Dictionary of Learned Men*[1], where we are told that he was born in Basrah in 329 (began Oct. 6, 940 A.D.) and died in Baghdad in 384 (994 A.D.),[2] after having occupied the position of judge (*qādī*) in many towns and districts of Mesopotamia.

The work of which the first Part is here presented in Arabic and English was according to the author [3] commenced in the year 361 (971 A.D.), and according to one of Yāqūt's authorities it occupied twenty years. Two other works by the same author are in existence; the collection of tales called *al-Faraj ba'd al-Shiddah* (Deliverance after Stress), of which we have a Cairene edition; and a collection of wise sayings, called *'Unwān al-*H*ikmah wal-Bayān* (The Title of Wisdom and Eloquence), of which there is a MS. copy in the Bodleian Library.

The account of his work which the author gives in his Preface is clear and accurate; and such fragments as are to be found in various works of the ten Parts of it which have not yet come to light indicate that the style throughout was uniform.[4] It was his purpose to record interesting facts which had come to his knowledge by personal experience or by hearsay; in general he avoided matter which had already appeared in books. He admits that there are exceptions to this rule to be found in his work, and indeed several of the stories already published in the *Deliverance after Stress* are repeated here.

The author belonged to a family which had originally come from Antioch, but in which the Judgeship had become hereditary in Mesopotamia. They followed the tenets of the *Mu'tazils*, or as they styled themselves " The People of Justice and Monotheism," who by admitting freedom of the will made it possible to believe in the justice of the Divine Being, and by denying the Divine Attributes arrived, as they supposed, at a truly Unitarian doctrine. To some extent they were freethinkers,

[1] vi. 251-267. See also Ibn Khallikan, tr. de Slane, ii. 564.

[2] Yāqūt gives the exact day, -5 Mu*h*arram = March 13.

[3] Below p. 6.

[4] Some references are given in the Post-script to the Arabic text. The name is printed correctly in the *Matāli' al-Budūr*.

as they denied the existence of the Jinn, in consequence whereof (as appears from stories in this book) their women and children were free from the common superstitions.

Of the narratives which he introduces some belong to the period covered by the closing volumes of Tabari's Chronicle, others to that recorded by Miskawaihi. The former is very imperfect, and can only occasionally be supplemented by that of Ya'qūbī; something however can be gleaned from the Diwans of the poets Bu*h*turī, Ibn al-Rūmī (of which only a small portion has as yet been published), and Ibn al-Mu'tazz, with whose futile attempt to mount the throne the first pages of Miskawaihi are occupied. Bu*h*turī was attached as court-poet to the whole series of Caliphs beginning with Wāthiq (842–847 A.D.), and ending with Mu'ta*d*id (892–902); he tells us much about the internal history of the Caliphate, and especially about the imperial buildings, whereon the chroniclers are silent. His services as encomiast were employed by many of the leading men of the time, with whom he renders us in a way familiar, though there is little originality in his facile verse. He has also a fair number of virulent satires, which contain the sort of matter that in our time gets into the daily papers or the society journals.

For the fourth century the Diwans of the Poets which we possess are less concerned with Baghdad and the regions of which it was the metropolis. The chief poet of this age, Mutanabbi, bestows his encomia chiefly on provincial princes; and Abū Firās (of whom some account is given in this work) is concerned chiefly with the court of the *H*amdānids, the family to which he himself belonged, though one of his poems is a sort of historical summary of their exploits at the capital and elsewhere. In no case however would the diwans, even if we had them complete, give us so clear a picture of contemporary life as can be gleaned from Tanūkhī's pages. There is a large amount of information about the celebrities of the time, with whom Tanūkhī himself or his authorities were well acquainted; we are enabled to see something of them at home. Some light is thrown on the ways wherein vast fortunes were acquired, and a strong light on the various modes wherein they were squandered. Various types of charlatan are brought on the scene, and we are let into the mysteries of their profession, as indeed into the even less reputable procedure of the "Artful Dodgers" of the time. Vast as is the catalogue of professions which the author in his Preface undertakes to illustrate, it is not clear that he has failed to keep his promise in the case of any even in this first volume of his work. The *Maqāmahs* of Hamadhānī, a somewhat younger contem-

porary, illustrate some of these types ; but Tanūkhī's range is vastly more copious, and he is not fettered by the artifices to which the other writer adheres.

Of numerous personages mentioned in these pages some account will be found in the Index to *The Eclipse of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate.* Some of the others are the subject of biographies included in the work of Ibn Khallikan, which is easily accessible. Since full Indices to this Book are given at the end of the Arabic text and in the Index mentioned, it has not been thought desirable to add another to the Translation.

For one matter an apology must be added. A few stories have been omitted from the Arabic text on the ground of their obscenity, and some of those left there have not been translated in this. As my friend Mr. Kurd 'Alī in the Journal of the Academy of Damascus has found fault with this procedure, I venture to assign a reason. One of the educational authorities in Cairo pleaded the cause of expurgated editions on the ground that it was desirable to provide good literature in Arabic for those whose literary language it is ; and many a work in classical Arabic contains matter which it is not desirable for the young to see. It may be added that it is frequently of a sort which has no scientific value either ; for there is nothing to be learned from *e.g.* the bulk of the matter contained in that *Baghdader Sittenbild* which Prof. Mez thought proper to publish. Now the *Table-talk* is precisely the sort of book which, it might be hoped, would be read with interest, pleasure and appreciation in educated families in those countries where education is in Arabic. I should very much prefer that in such households the book might without danger be left about. The benefit which will thereby accrue outweighs to my mind any disadvantage which arises from the expurgation.

In translating the verses of which considerable numbers are cited I have followed the example of Dr. Nicholson, who at times renders such passages in prose, at times reproduces them in verse. I have not endeavoured, as he occasionally has done, to reproduce the original metres ; the natural rhythms of the two languages are so very different that it is difficult for the reader to perceive what the rhythm is intended to be.

That there is much in these anecdotes which will be unfamiliar to those who have made no special study of Islamic history must, of course, be admitted ; a few of the technicalities have been explained in an Appendix, but many of the institutions to which there are frequent allusions can only be understood by those to whom study of that sub-

ject has rendered them familiar. Even to such persons the system which confines the right of giving evidence to qualified persons seems unworkable ; and the mixture of lawlessness with despotic authority which is exhibited by these stories is hard to visualize. The combination of freethinking with gross superstition is also puzzling, though perhaps other periods of history indicate something of the kind. Yet perhaps the impression which most of the anecdotes will leave is rather that of the modernness of Baghdad when it was the metropolis of the Caliphate than of its distance from the practices and institutions of our days. A critic of the *Eclipse of the 'Abbasid Caliphate* [1] remarked that the publication of that work was well-timed, owing to the political prominence which has recently been given to the Caliphate. The translator ventures to hope that the same verdict may be passed on this supplement to it, on the ground that the achievements of Great Britain in Mesopotamia, and the Mesopotamian mandate, have given the British nation an interest in Baghdad which in former years it did not possess.

[1] *The Times*, June 6, 1922.

PREFACE.

The first page of the MS. is fragmentary. Supplements are in italics.

In the Name of Allah the Ra*h*man, the Merciful, and may His favour rest upon our noble lord Mohammed and his saintly family, possessors of——

It is my purpose to collect in this work such stories as are current on men's lips, *and which have not hitherto been transferred* from the custody of their memories to perpetuation in note-books ; matters such as are not usually written down nor placed on record in scrolls ; such as it is customary for the hearer to recollect in order to repeat them when anything similar occurs to demand it, or render it appropriate. It may be that the reader will hold them in low esteem when he finds that they vary from the usual style of narratives and anecdotes, which have their established place in literature, and are in the hands of men of letters ; especially if he be unaware of the cause which induced me to put them into writing. This was that, meeting certain learned, literary, and otherwise excellent sheikhs, who were familiar with the story of the nations, and the chronicles of kings and dynasties, *who had been instructed in the virtues and* vices of the nations and their various excellences and defects, and had heard . . . . *I became acquainted with* a fresh and attractive type of tales

Of Kings
Viziers
Sayyids
(**4**) Misers
Arrogant men and haughty
The nobility
Wits
Ne'erdoweels
Courtiers
Conversationalists
Messmates
The Sagacious
The quickwitted
The Munificent
The Generous
Fools
The forgiving
Metaphysicians
Savants
Traditionalists
Jurists
Philosophers
Doctors
Theorists
Cranks
Belle-lettrists
Scholars
Epistolographers
Stylists
Authors of *Rejez*
Orators
Metricians
Poets
Genealogists
Reciters
Men of retentive memory
Men of miscellaneous knowledge
Lexicographers
Grammarians
Witnesses
Judges
Stewards
Governors
Administrators
Able men
Cavaliers
Men of renown
Heroes
Champions
Soldiers
Captains
Huntsmen
Fishermen
Spies
Secret Service men
Calumniators
Talebearers
Booksellers
Teachers
Calculators
Authors
Public officials
Heads of departments
Cultivators
Farmers
Owners of land-tax and land
Agricultural labourers and peasants
Philosophers of the highroad

Chatterboxes
Formers of circles (in mosques)
Preachers
Story-tellers
Pietists and devotees
Anchorites
Hermits
Wanderers in mountain and desert
Ritualists and saints
Supermen (in the Sufi sense)
Lovers of solitude
Aspirants
Men who go into hiding
Votaries
Ascetics
Eremites
Sufis
Self-torturers
Leaders of Prayer
Qur'an-readers
Chanters
Men of worth and excellence
Men of worthlessness and deficiency
Simpletons and men of arrested development
Men of sharpness and abnormal development
Sharpers
Cautious persons
Fanatics
Knife-men
Highwaymen
Thieves
Camel-lifters
Spendthrifts
Failures in life
Robbers
Players of backgammon
Players of chess
Wits
Humourists
Narrators of anecdotes
Buffoons
Heirs of estates who were wastrels
Parasites and sycophants
Gluttons
Tablemates
(**5**) Drinkers
Boon-companions
Singing-girls
Singers
Dancers
Hermaphrodites
Owners of singing-women
Manipulators of arms
Purchasers of singers
Listeners to music
Jesters
Loose-livers
Profligates
Lunatics
Half-witted persons
Dotards
Suggesters
Tempters
Followers of the System (Mu'tazils ?)
Melancholics

Jugglers
Schemers
Heretics
Prophetasters
Physicians
Astrologers
Administerers of eye-salves
Cuppers
Healers
Binders of wounds
Surgeons
Dealers in dry drugs
Augurs
Impostors
Diviners by lot
Diviners by words
Strolling gamesters (?)
Interpreters of dreams
Beggars
Mendicants
Favourites of fortune
The unlucky
Runners
Travellers
Walkers
Wanderers
Swimmers
Divers
Seafarers
Men who walk the desert
Artisans
Artists
Plutocrats
Paupers
Traders
Men of means
Great women
Free women
Slave-girls
Properties of stones and animals
Drugs
Medicaments
Spells
Mixtures
Singular stories
Unique coincidences
Queer dreams
Sublime narratives.

Other types, too, of tales about the good and bad, the helpful and harmful, dwellers in cities and in tents, in the desert and the town, in East and West, near and far.

Now the people on whom I drew for most of my material told it in course of ordinary conversation, and when they had finished their witticisms and displays of learning, and were afraid of wearying their hearers with their science and their aphorisms : with the view of maintaining conversation, furnishing openings for discussion, evoking stories about past and present times,

comparing the ways of different peoples and divers events, instituting comparison between what they had witnessed and what they had heard, the vicissitudes which they had suffered and (**6**) the marvels which had been narrated to them. Each topic was handled by them according to the requirements of the party and as the style of the conversation suggested. I took note of what they said at the time, and on various occasions made use of it for direction of my conduct. As years passed, and the old men who had supplied these topics died off, and of their like few remained, whose death would involve the loss of what they narrated unless some one memorized it: and as I found the characters of our kings and magnates fall short of the standard of nobility reflected in those anecdotes,—else witnessing the like thereof we might have dispensed with the trouble of memorizing and committing to writing the ancient examples :—nay more, those characters are the very contrary of the characters, habits, ways and manners of their predecessors, as indicated by those narratives; so much so that if any survivor among those old men tells a story of this type in the presence of the rulers and magnates of our time (particularly if it deal with munificence, good nature, high fortune, magnanimity, broadmindedness, easy circumstances, or high morality), they reject it as false, treat it as imposture, and brand it as extravagant, being unable themselves to realize the like. Some petty thing whereto they have themselves attained is to their minds grand in comparison with the grandest thing mentioned in those tales; and their minds are unable to conceive anything resembling those noble qualities, just as their hearts are unequal to the performance of anything approaching those deeds of heroism. And this is notwithstanding that among the men who do their duty as teachers, the scholars who undertake to instruct and to make wise, the proficients in every branch of learning or science, in earnest and jest, and in the arts, there are

such as are pre-eminent in genius, and in inner and outer grace, in skilful performance, and in masterly treatment, above many of their predecessors in time, who were born in that earlier age. (7) Such persons however get from the magnates of our time mere honour without honorarium, and such favours only as involve no burdens nor running into debt. They give him no high place, and only glance at him occasionally. The reason of this is the corruption of this age, and its degeneration from the former one ; instincts being altered for the worse, and the old fashions being worn out. The desire for learning is wanting, and there is a lack of noble aspirations. The populace are distracted from such things by care for their living, while the magnates are satisfied with the gratification of their brutal passions. We have got into the state foretold in the Tradition that times will get worse and worse, and mankind into greater and greater straits, and that the Day of Judgment will break on the vilest of the race. A fine verse of his own was recited to me by Abu'l-*T*ayyib Mutanabbi, describing our present condition :

> His sons entered time
> When still in its prime ;
> And so they were pleased ;
> We find it diseased.

And I was told by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Yusuf b. Ya'qub b. Is*h*aq Buhlul Tanukhi, whose father is known as Abu Bakr Azraq Anbari, the following : My father said to me : If the Day of Judgment be the severest of days, the nearer any day is to it, the more it realizes its conditions, the severer it must be.—It so happened that in the year 361 (began Oct. 24, 971 A.D.) after an absence of years I was present at some saloons in Baghdad, and I found them empty of those with whom they had been crowded, and whose conversation had enlivened them and made them brilliant. I met only with relics of those sheikhs. We conversed, and I found that the

stories which I cherished in my memory were now antiquated and rarely mentioned, and even such anecdotes of the sort as were still current were mutilated ; indeed those who repeated any quantity of what I had heard would confuse it with matter which would stultify and spoil it. I found every narrative which I had forgotten would, had I memorized it, have suited some topic of conversation, some type or other of TABLE TALK. In consequence I proceeded to write down all that I could recollect of that wherewith my memory had formerly been stored, and further determined to write down all that I might hear of this sort (**8**) and enliven it with something which might attract men to read it, such as verses by some modern poetaster, or some elegant and accomplished epistolographer ; or else some prose by a contemporary, some epistle or composition original in idea, or in elegant verse and prose : confining myself to authors whose works, whether in prose or verse, were not in men's hands, and whose collected compositions had not been copied repeatedly, while their gems too were not commonly quoted. To these I added passages which contain some fresh proverb, some new maxim, some recent *bon mot,* or some wise saying lately hatched, to show that the present age keeps up a supply of talent and ability in the various arts and sciences that is as copious as, or more copious than that of past ages ; only the favour bestowed by the earlier dynasties on learning brought it to the light of day, whereas the discouragement of it by the princes of our time buries it in obscurity. This is why noble deeds done under these dynasties are obscured and the tales of these sovereigns are rejected, the chronicles failing to record the wonders of our time ; for men of worth will not spend their days in eternizing other people's glories and expending thereon the produce of their brains when they are to have no profit or benefit themselves. Most of the princes, potentates, leaders and plutocrats bestow no gratuity on them, whence the

latter have no inducement to compose odes, orations, pamphlets or books of excellence, which might perpetuate the exploits of the former through all ages. The former are miserly and the latter negligent, and each of the parties is content to do less than he might and to do his task perfunctorily. For all that in our time and that which immediately preceded it such secrets of science have been discovered, such subtleties of thought have been made known as might well have been too hard for or even inaccessible to our predecessors in past ages.

During this period besides there have occurred some marvellous events, great battles, wonderful revolutions, strange coincidences, subtle stratagems, well organized and stable institutions, (**9**) the like of which cannot be found in past times, in many times the same number of years. Were these things compiled in books, perpetuated by the composition of odes and orations about them, and recorded at length in continuous chronicles, they would prove well worthy of more attention than the records of former ages. Of these matters too I have put a small, indeed a trifling amount into writing, and that concisely, in order that I may not diverge from my main subject, while that may not be without topics only treated here, such as may provide the intelligent person who has a taste for learning, when they strike his ear and are assimilated by his mind, with such moral lessons, such mental and sensuous delicacy, as may save him the trouble of going to experience or picking up the like from men's lips; such matter as will train him for this world and the next, teach him the consequences of well-doing and ill-doing, how actions must ultimately turn out, how a republic should be administered, what mistakes he should avoid, so as neither to be involved in nor plunge into the like. With this before him he will not need to spend his life in experiments, nor await the results which the years will reveal.

I have put down material written from what I had memorized long ago, mixed with some only recently heard, without any arrangement under heads or groups, because the work contains anecdotes suitable for recounting on a variety of occasions. In most cases any endeavour to allocate and combine, to assort and arrange, would only have led to dullness and tediousness ; the reader, knowing from the character of the first narrative in a section that the remainder would be in the same style, would have neither the patience nor the curiosity to peruse the whole, and would not be disposed to plunge any deeper. Such a plan too would work havoc with the supplementary matter introduced, such as the odes, epistles, proverbs, extracts. Were these grouped under heads, **(10)** they would have to be combined with matter of the same sort found elsewhere in the book, and this would interfere with the principle already stated, whereby it is to consist of material of a sort hitherto unrecorded, and picked up from oral communication as opposed to written works. This would cause us to depart from our aim and object, and the straight path which it is our intention to pursue. And indeed the value of this work does not lie in assortment, nor is its aim putting like by like ; indeed it is likely that much of its contents is without parallel or match, and is rather *sui generis* and original. Mixture renders it more agreeable to the ear and more impressive, less cumbrous to the mind than to the ear and more easily taken in. And though I have to the best of my ability avoided introducing anything which had previously been written, or to which others had called attention as worth recording,—except of course verse, which does not come within this category—I own that I have in a few cases admitted matter which I knew to be found in written works, not indeed of set purpose, but suggested by something which rendered it desirable ; this too for some advantage which justified my doing so and encouraged to such a course, and with the view of embellishing these

narratives with what would endear them to most students of history.

I have made each volume of this work—consisting of a hundred leaves — an independent unit, which the reader can enjoy apart from the others, none of which will he need when he has one of them before him, albeit each of those others contains material of value not to be learned from any other source.

To each volume I have further prefixed a preface indicating the nature of the anecdotes embodied in all the volumes, their scope, and the motive which led me to collect them ; these prefaces contain a summary of this lengthy explanation and an epitome of its contents. Into each volume I have introduced miscellanies of a sort to which analogous material may well be found in the other volumes, amid **(11)** narratives to which parallels could not easily be discovered, at least among actual occurrences and such as have proved within the bounds of possibility.

I hope that there may be a market for my collection, and that the result of my labours, and the physical exertion of putting down in writing, may not be wasted. It would be something, if it only proved better than blank paper—please God, whom I pray to direct my utterance, and to adjust all my actions ; to protect me from errors, mistakes and aberrations. Truly He may be counted on for that, and speedily realizes that which is hoped for from Him. He " is sufficient for me," to Him I at all times resort, on Him I rely ; there is no power nor strength save in Him, a right good Master and Trustee is He.

THE TABLE-TALK OF A MESOPOTAMIAN JUDGE.

I was told the following by Abu'l-'Abbas Hibat Allah b. Mohammed b. Yusuf, known as Ibn al-Munajjim the Messmate, one of the sons of Ya*h*ya Ibn Abi Man*s*ur companion of Ma'mun, who, with his ancestors and family is celebrated for association with Caliphs, Viziers and princes, just as all of them are renowned as authorities on theology, astrology, science, learning, and for versification and the composition of works on the different branches of these subjects, as well as for the high offices which they held in the government, and the rank and fortune which they enjoyed. Abu'l-'Abbas himself is too well known as a scholar, poet, dialectician, lawyer, etc. of surpassing merit to require further description. He was the familiar friend of Abu Mohammed Muhallabi, and enjoyed his confidence for many years as also that of succeeding viziers and other great men, and is one of the survivors of his house. He said : I was in the presence of Abu Makhlad 'Abdallah b. Ya*h*ya *T*abari, minister of Mu'izz al-daulah, when the topic of conversation was generosity and the generous, munificence and the munificent, and the gifts which the Barmecides and others used to lavish upon people. Abu Makhlad professed himself sceptical about these stories, even suggesting that they were traps laid by mendicants (**12**) for catching people's coins, having no foundation in fact. I said to him : Sheikh, if you say this, the like was formerly said by *S*ā'id,[1] and answered. What, he asked, did he say ? —I replied : Being told about the munificence of the

[1] Vizier of Mu'tamid, ob. 270.

Barmecides, he declared that these tales were fictions invented by sycophants. Abu'l-'Aina, who was present, asked why no similar tales were invented about his excellency the Vizier, from whom something was to be hoped and feared, whereas the Barmecides were dead, and could do neither good nor harm.—Abu Makhlad blushed.

A similar story to this shall now be told, though it is to be found in books ; it may encourage people to do the like, and that is a good end. I was told by Abu Mohammed Ya*h*ya b. Mohammed Azdi how, as he had heard, when Ibn al-Zayyāt [1] was thrown into the chest, one of his attendants said *It was with a view to such a situation as this that we used to urge you to do kindness and lay people under obligations, and confer favours in the time of your power that you might reap the reward at the time of need such as the present.* He replied : *Had I acted in that way it would have done me no good, so weak is affection, so treacherous and ungrateful are the majority of men. Do you suppose I could have done more than the Barmecides, yet it profited them nothing when they like me became the victims of fortune's frown and the sovereign's tyranny.* The attendant replied : *If they had got no more than to be mentioned by you at such a time, that would have been the greatest profit.*

I was told the following by Abu'l-Faraj 'Ali b. *H*asan Ispahani the Clerk : after *H*asan b. 'Ali after Ibn Mahrawaihi, after Ābu Shibl 'Asim b. Wahb Burjumi. I was present (said this last) in the saloon of 'Ubaidallāh b. Ya*h*ya b. Khāqān,[2] my liberal benefactor, when the topic

[1] Vizier of Wathiq, who incurred the wrath of his successor Mutawakkil before he came to the throne, and after his accession was punished by imprisonment in a wooden chest with nails ; in the middle was a crossbar whereon the person tortured sat when he wanted to rest. The exact mode of torture is not further described. Tabari iii. 1375.

[2] Vizier during the period of anarchy from the reign of Mutawakkil to that of Mu'tamid.

of conversation was the Barmecides, the munificence ascribed to them, the gifts and gratuities which they bestowed ; those present dilated on this theme. Rising up in the middle of the assembly I said : Vizier, (**13**) I have composed a judgment on this subject, which I have versified as a couplet. No-one can refute that judgment, and I have versified it to facilitate its being remembered and circulated. Would the Vizier permit me to recite it ? He told me to do so, adding that I had uttered many a wise word. I repeated the lines :

I regard 'Ubaidallah as freer-handed and more munificent than Fa*d*l son of Ya*h*ya son of Khalid.

(Another time he recited this line in the following form :

I regard 'Ubaidallah as more lordly and munificent than Fa*d*l, Ya*h*ya or his grandfather ;
They were munificent when fortune favoured ; he when fortune was unfavourable.)

I was present in the saloon of *H*asan b. 'Ali b. Zaid the Astrologer, retainer of Abu Nāfi', when he was Mu'izz al-daulah's governor of Ahwaz with some of its dependencies and had the rank of one of his viziers. He had been formerly in the service of my father after quitting that of Qāsim b. Dīnār, governor of Ahwaz. He served as steward in his house and on his estate, and as his deputy at the stamping office in the Mint of Suq al-Ahwaz. Presently my father got him into the service of Abu 'Abdallah Barīdī, in which he rose till presently he attained the rank which I have mentioned. When I went to see him—he was at that time at the height of his glory, while I was a young lad—he showed me special favour. He used to like being eulogized to his face ; people therefore were loud in his praises and recounted his repairing of the religious foundations and watering places, his bringing water into the end of the Masruqan, and his just distribution of the Alms Fund. I joined in. He said to me : My lad, when the grandees of this empire relate this sort of thing about me, they

declare that the Astrologer does all this for show. I assure you that I do it for God's glory only; but if it be for show, it is still a good thing, and why should not they be similarly hypocritical? (**14**) Only natures have become mean, even in envy. In old times those who envied a man's wealth were anxious to make money in order to be like him; if they envied his learning, they studied in order to be his rivals; if they envied his munificence, they became lavish till it was said that they were more generous than he. (He proceeded with this enumeration.) In these days of weaklings and poor souls who have not the power to render themselves like the objects of their envy in the matter which excites it, they turn to depreciating the excellent; if he be rich,[1] they try to impoverish him; if he be learned, they charge him with errors; if he be munificent, they assert that his liberality is business, and they prove him to be a miser. If he be a benefactor, they dub him hypocrite.

The following was told me by the qa*d*i Abu'l-*H*asan Mohammed b. 'Abd al-Wā*h*id Hashimi: *H*āmid b. 'Abbās was, he said, of all those whom I have seen the broadest-minded, most magnificent, most munificent, most lavish and most conscientious in the matter of his liberality. Every day he would have a number of tables laid in his residence, and no-one, grandee, plebeian or attendant, down to people's slaves might leave his palace at a meal-time without eating. As many as forty tables would be laid in his palace at one time, and every one who was supplied with bread was also supplied with meat; while the rations of the former were all white bread. One day coming into his vestibule he noticed the husk of a bean. Summoning his steward he asked whether beans were eaten in his palace. The steward said that it was the doing of the porters. Have they then, he asked, no rations of meat? The steward

[1] The text has "poor."

said they had. He told the steward to ask them the reason for the presence of beans, and when he did so, their reply was : We do not enjoy eating the meat without our families, so we send it home, to eat it with them at night; at lunch time we fast and eat beans. *H*amid ordered a special ration to be supplied them to be sent to their families at home, and that they should eat (**15**) their own ration in the vestibule. This was done ; after some days however he again saw bean-husks in his vestibule, and was incensed. Being irritable and foul-mouthed he abused his steward : Did I not, he asked, double the rations, so how come these bean-husks to be about the vestibule ?—He replied : When the rations were doubled, they assigned the first each day to their families, but let the second accumulate with the butcher, so that when they were off duty and could repose in their homes in the daytime, they could take the lot from the butcher and make a feast.—He said : Let the rations be maintained as they are, and each morning before our own tables are laid let one be taken for these people at which they may have their meal. If after this I find any bean-husks in my vestibule, I shall have you and all of them scourged.—This was done, at considerable additional expense.

I was told by the qa*d*i Abu'l-*H*asan 'Abdallah b. A*h*mad b. *H*ārith b. 'Abbās Jauhari of Baghdad and Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn Ma'mūn Hāshimi, that at the time of the catastrophe which resulted in *H*amid's being put to death [1] there were found in the well of a privy belonging to him 400,000 dinars in gold, which he revealed when severely pressed. I was told by some-one else that *H*amid had arranged a chamber as a privy, and ordered his steward to purchase dinars and bring them to him. Each time he got a purse he would put it under his garments and rise up ostensibly to go to the latrine. Proceeding

[1] See i. 94.

to this chamber he would drop the purse into the well, but would not carry out his ostensible purpose, though letting his bedmaker suppose that he had. When he left, he would lock the room up and let no-one else enter it, as is the custom with the privies of the great which they reserve for their exclusive use. When he wished to enter it, it would be opened for him by the slave who attended to his ablutions, and who also was unacquainted with the secret. When the amount was completed, he would say that this privy was cramped and disagreeable, and had better be closed up and another substituted for it. The well would then be filled in and the supposed privy put out of use (**16**), while the coins remained stored in the place unknown to any one but himself. When money was urgently demanded of him he revealed them, and when unearthed they were found to be intact. Their existence was only known through his confession.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Abbas that he had heard from a number of trustworthy clerks that they had calculated the amount to which the fine of ABU 'ABDALLAH IBN AL-JA*SS*A*S* came in the days of Muqtadir, and it reached the figure of 6,000,000 dinars exclusive of his palace which was seized and of the real estate which was left him.

I heard the Emir ABU MOHAMMED JA'FAR B. WARQA B. MOHAMMED B. WARQA SHAIBANI in the year 349[1] telling the following story. I passed, he said, by Ibn al-Ja*ss*a*s* some days after he had been released and allowed after paying his fine to return to his house[2]; he was my friend and allied to me by marriage. I noticed him at a window of his palace on the Tigris, at a hot time of a very hot day. He was barefoot and dazed, running

[1] Last heard of in 334, ii. 92. (349) began March 3, 960.

[2] For his arrest see i. 35. According to the Faraj ba'd al-shiddah i. 113, he was released by the Queen-mother's intercession. The same lady allowed him to have a number of bales of coarse linen returned to him, not knowing that he had hidden therein 100,000 dinars.

from one end of the balcony to the other. I directed my barge thither, and mounted to him without asking permission. When he saw me he blushed, and ran into a saloon. I said to him : My good friend, what is the matter with you ?—He proceeded to call for a basin of water, washed his face and feet, and fell down for a space like one in a fit. Then he said : Have I not a right to be distraught when I have lost so much and so much has been taken from me (enumerating vast sums which he had been compelled to surrender) ? When can I hope to replace them ? Why should I not be distraught with regret for them ?—I said : My friend, the destination of wealth is incalculable, whereas you should know that the soul, the mind, and the body cannot be replaced ; so long as these last remain safe, you still have the chief thing. Such distress as yours is only for one who fears poverty and having to solicit (**17**) people, or having to dispense with his customary food, drink and clothing, etc., or else a loss of dignity. Be patient then while I show you that there is no wearer of a *tailasan* [1] in Baghdad to-day who is wealthier than you in spite of your losses.—He told me to proceed. I said : Is not this house still yours which belonged to you before your fine, and have you not reason to be proud of the furniture and fittings which it contains, even though they may not be so superb as before ?—He assented—And you still possess land in Karkh to the value of 50,000 dinars ?—I do.—And the *H*ouris' Palace, worth 10,000 dinars ?—Yes.—And land at the *T*āq Gate worth 30,000 dinars ?—Yes.—And your Garden called so-and-so, and your estate called so-and-so, worth so much ?—Yes.—And property in Basrah worth 100,000 dinars ?—Yes.—I proceeded to enumerate his properties and estates till I had reached the figure of 900,000 dinars. And now, I said, tell me the truth about the value of the jewels, utensils, furniture,

[1] This phrase seems to stand here for a distinguished but non-official personage.

perfumes, slaves of both sexes, and of your palace.—He began to give me a frank estimate while I reckoned up till the figure reached 300,000 dinars. I then said: My friend, who in Baghdad to-day has possessions to the value of a million? Then, I added, your estimation among the people is what it was before, for they suppose that the fortune which remains to you is twice this; why then are you so distressed?

Ibn al-Jassas thereupon prostrated himself, praising God and weeping; then he said: I assure you that I was so deep in reflexion that I forgot all this that is left me, and regarded it as of little account when compared with what has been taken from me. Had you not come to me just now, I should have gone on brooding till I went mad. God has saved me through you, and no-one has given me such profitable consolation. For three days I have eaten nothing, and I should like you to stay so that we may make a joint repast, talk and amuse ourselves.—(**18**) I agreed to this proposal. I spent the rest of the day with him, feasting and conversing.

In the year 350 I met in Baghdad Ibn al-Jassās's son Abu 'Ali Ibn Abi 'Abdallāh. I found him an agreeable and entertaining Sheikh. I asked him about the tales told of his father, *e.g.* how once being behind a leader of prayer, when the latter recited the words *not those with whom Thou art angry nor those who go astray*[1] in lieu of *Amen* he said *Aye, by my life!* Or how he once said to the vizier Khāqānī *I was kept awake yesterday by the barking of dogs in the lane at my door, each one of them like me or like the vizier*; or how, when he wanted to kiss this vizier's head and he said to him *better not, as it is pomaded,* he replied *If the vizier's head had excrement upon it, I should kiss it all the same;* or how describing the antiquity of a copy of the Qur'an he said *It is of Khosroes's time:* with similar tales which are recounted

[1] End of the First Surah.

about him in great numbers. He said that the story *Aye, by my life* and the like were fictions, for his father was not sufficiently silly to do such things. Indeed he was one of the shrewdest and cleverest of men. Only he used in the presence of viziers to slip into expressions such as have been described owing to natural unconventionality, and because he liked to represent himself before them as dull of wit, in order that the viziers might not be afraid of him, as he associated so much with the Caliphs, and he might not suffer at their hands. I can tell you a story about him which he told me himself, which will show you that he was exceedingly prudent, and that a person who could act in such a way could not have performed the things told about him.—I requested him to proceed.—My father told me, he said, that Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn al-Furāt in one of his vizierates owing to some resentment which he harboured made a violent onslaught on him. He sent his agents, he said, to my estates, with orders to cancel my contracts, and he mercilessly reviled and humiliated me in his saloons. **(19)** When I entered his presence he constantly insulted me. I tried the mediation of many persons, and offered much for the purpose of effecting a reconciliation, but without success. He continued his attacks, which I bore patiently in the hope of getting him to change his mind, till one day when I entered his palace, as I was going away I heard his doorkeeper say : *What a treasure is walking on the ground! Two millions walking about and no-one to take them !* I knew that was the language of his master, and that my ruin was meant. At that time I possessed seven million dinars in gold and gems, besides other property. I was in sore distress and kept awake the whole night, considering what I should do with him. In the last third of the night an idea came into my mind. I rode at once to his palace, where I found the doors locked. I knocked. The porters asked who it was. Ibn al-Jassas, I replied. They said : This is no time for an audience, as the vizier

is asleep. I said : Tell the chamberlain that I am here on business. They did so. A chamberlain presently came out and said : He will soon wake and give you an audience, so you must wait.—I said : The matter is too urgent for that, so wake him up and tell him this from me.—The man went in and after some delay came out again and led me from apartment to apartment till I reached his sleeping room. There he was on a couch, and round him some fifty beds for his retainers, who apparently had been on guard, but had risen, and the bedding was being removed. He was sitting on his bed in terror, supposing that some catastrophe had occurred, or that I had brought a message from the Caliph and he was anxious to know what I was about to reveal. Bidding me approach, he asked what had brought me at such a time. I said : Something advantageous ; no catastrophe has occurred, neither have I any message, nor I have come about anything save what privately concerns the vizier and myself, which can only be discussed with him in extreme privacy.—He became calmer, ordered those about him to withdraw, which they did, and then bade me say what I had to.—I said : Vizier, you have attacked me violently, and are bent on **(20)** ruining me and destroying my fortune, the destruction of which means the loss of my life. Fortune and life cannot be replaced. I admit that I have done you some ill turns, but to my mind a little of this castigation would have been sufficient. I have done my utmost to conciliate you, have employed so-and-so as mediator, have offered so much and undertaken so much, but you are inflexibly bent on injuring me. Now there is no creature weaker than a cat, yet if a cat makes a nuisance in a greengrocer's shop, and he ties it to a corner with intent to strangle it, it springs upon him, scratches his face and body, and rips his clothes, trying to save itself by any means in its power. Now I find myself in a similar situation with you. I have at least as much courage as a cat,

and I am making this interview an excuse for our future relations. If you accept my terms for a compromise, well and good ; otherwise you will know what to expect. I swore the most solemn oaths that I should immediately proceed to the Caliph, turn over to him from my treasury two million dinars, gold and silver, which would be in his possession by the morning. You know, I said, that this is within my power ; I will then say to him : Take this money, and surrender Ibn al-Furāt to some-one, making the latter vizier ; and I will nominate the person whom to my mind he will be most ready to appoint, some person of acceptable appearance, a sweet tongue, a good handwriting, and a ready wit ; and I need not go further than one of your clerks, for the Caliph will see no difference between you and them if he sees the cash. He will surrender you at once to them, and the person appointed will look upon me as the man who took him from his humble station and made him vizier, incurring thereby so heavy a loss. He will think of me as his god and his benefactor, and will be guided entirely by my advice. I will surrender you to him, and he will torture you till he extorts from you the whole of the two million dinars. You are aware that your fortune is equal to such a payment, though it will impoverish you. My money will thus return to me without the loss of a (**21**) single *dānaq ;* so that I shall have ruined my enemy, gratified my spite, recovered my money, and preserved my fortune, while I shall have acquired new dignity as having caused the dismissal of one vizier and the appointment of another.

When Ibn al-Furāt heard this he was aghast and said : Enemy of God, could you reconcile such a step with your conscience ?—I replied : I am not the enemy of God ; God's enemy is rather the man who has reconciled with his conscience such treatment of me as has compelled me to contemplate such a step. Why should I not think it right to damage the man who wishes to destroy

me and put an end to my fortune ?—He said : What is the other alternative ?—I said : That you should immediately swear such oaths as I dictate to you that you will be on my side and not against me in small matters and great, that you will not reduce any payment due to me nor alter any of my contracts nor otherwise injure my interests, but will on the contrary promote them and my good repute, will seek to do me no mischief, instigate no plots against me, nor devise my downfall at any time openly or secretly, etc. etc.—I stipulated that I must be secure against all that I feared he might do to me.—He said : Then will you too swear a similar oath to be loyal, obedient and helpful ?—I agreed to do so. He said : God's curse on you ; you must be the Devil, and have bewitched me.—He then demanded ink, and we drew up the formula of the oath, to which I made him swear first, afterwards doing the like myself.

When I desired to leave, he said : Abu 'Abdallāh, you have raised my opinion of you, and relieved me of a burden. For indeed I am aware that Muqtadir would not, as you say, with the cash before him distinguish between my competence, ability and worth and those of the humblest of my clerks ; let what has passed remain a secret.—I said : In God's name ! He said : In the morning come to me in the public saloon that you may see what treatment you will receive.—When I rose he said : Slaves, all of you go in front of Abu 'Abdallah.—Two hundred retainers marched out in front of me, and I returned home before sunrise. I reposed, and went (22) to him at the time of the audience. He made me take precedence of all who were there, paid me a handsome compliment, and treated me in a style which showed those present that he was reconciled to me. He also ordered letters to be sent to the provincial finance-ministers bidding them treat my agents with respect, and look after my goods and estates. He also ordered the

clerks of the bureaux to remove all instructions which they had introduced tending to the alteration of my receipts and the increase of my charges. I was to be treated according to the original practice. I thanked him and rose ; he bade his retainers precede me, and the chamberlains started with drawn swords before me. This was witnessed by the people, who marvelled. My position was now re-established, and no-one knew the cause of our reconciliation.

He did not talk about this till after his arrest.

Abu 'Ali, his son, now said to me : Is this the conduct or the wit of one about whom such stories as those might reasonably be told ?—I said No.

I was told by Abu Mohammed 'Abdallāh b. A*h*mad b. Abi Bakr Dāssah that he had heard the following from one of his teachers. We were, he said, in the presence of the qa*d*i Abu 'Umar, when the conversation turned on Ibn al-Ja*ss*a*s* and his stupidity. Abu 'Umar said, Good Heavens, he is not that sort. I was paying him a complimentary visit a few days ago, and there was a pavilion pitched in his court. We sat near it talking, when the creaking of a shoe was heard behind the pavilion. He called out : Slave, bring me the woman who has just been walking behind the pavilion. A black slave-girl was brought. He asked her what she had been doing there. She said : I came to tell the eunuch that I have finished the cooking and to ask leave to bring it in. He bade her go about her business. I perceived that he wanted me to know that the step was that of a common negress, not that of a guarded member of his hareem. He was anxious that I should not fancy such a thing of one of his hareem. Could such a man be a fool ?

I was told by Abu'l-'Abbas Hibat Allah b. al-Munajjim that he had heard from his grandfather how, when Muqtadir arrested (**23**) Ibn al-Ja*ss*a*s* he sent people to

his palace to make an inventory of its contents and remove them. The person who wrote out the inventory said to me: We have found among his goods seven hundred water-coolers made of reed.[1] Think of the hospitality of a man among whose goods such a quantity of these articles is to be found!

I was in the presence of the late vizier Abu Mohammed *H*asan b. Mohammed b. Harūn Muhallabi in Baghdad, when he received a visit from Abu Is*h*āq Qarārī*t*ī after his return from Egypt.[2] Abu'l-Qāsim Juhani was present. He said to the vizier: Sir, kindly ask Abu Is*h*aq about the story of the turquoise vases which I related to you; for I mentioned that he was present on the occasion and I did not know that he was coming from Egypt and that I should be able to support him.—Muhallabi said: You have no need of this.—He said: Oh yes, sir, I have.—Turning to Qarari*t*i, he proceeded: I told our lord the vizier how I was sent by Muqtadir when I was minister for estates of deceased persons to seize the inheritance of some one (he mentioned a high official, whose name I have forgotten for certain, but I fancy he said Anas Muwaffaqi), and you also were sent, your help being required in making an inventory of the property, which was tremendous. Among the goods we found thirty turquoise vases, each of them over a span across, in cases made of *khaizuran* core lined with silk and satin embroidered with plants, and decorated with gold. We took them to Muqtadir, who was bewildered by their beauty. He summoned Ibn al-Ja*ss*ā*s* and bade him value them. He said he could not price them, as he had never seen their like; had I not, he said, seen them with my own eyes, I should not have believed that their like existed. If I were to say that each one was worth a hundred thousand dinars, I should not be afraid

[1] Perhaps "covered with reed matting" is what is meant.

[2] He was last heard of with Muttaqi in Mausil, ii. 48.

I was exaggerating.—Now (said Abu'l-Qāsim Juhanī) when I told my lord the vizier this story, many of his guests disbelieved me ; you, sir, were in Egypt at the time. Perhaps you will now think fit to attest my statement.—Qarārī*t*ī said : Vizier, Abu'l-Qāsim spoke truly ; I myself saw those turquoises and seized them out of the estate for Muqtadir.—And I heard this Ibn al-Ja*ss*as[1] say : But Abu'l-Qasim has forgotten something which happened, and which he has not mentioned.—Muhallabī asked what it was.—He said : We asked the man's treasurer about these cups and their source. He said he did not know whence their owner had obtained them, but that he had possessed eighty, of which he had given a number to various sovereigns, and these were the remainder.—Muhallabī was much pleased with the story.

I was told by Abu'l-'Abbās Hibat Allāh etc. the following which he had heard from his grandfather. A woman, he said, stood waiting on the road for *H*āmid b. 'Abbās and complained to him of poverty, asking alms and handing him a petition which she had brought. When he had taken his seat, he gave her an order for two hundred dinars. The paymaster, unwilling to pay such a sum to a woman of her class, consulted *H*āmid, who said that he had only meant to give her two hundred *dirhems*. But as God had caused him to write dinars, he would not go back on it. So he bade the man pay her the sum. He did so. After some days a man put a petition into his hand, wherein he said that his wife and he had been poor, that she had petitioned the vizier, who had given her two hundred dinars, in consequence whereof she was giving herself airs, and was trying to force him to divorce her. Would the vizier be so good as to give orders to some one to restrain her ? *H*āmid laughed and ordered the man to be given two hundred

[1] Probably he should have said Abu Is*h*aq.

dinars, saying: Give them him and tell him that his fortune is now equal to hers, and she will not demand a divorce.—The man took the money, and went home a rich man.

I was told the following by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Yūsuf b. Ya'qūb b. Is*h*āq Buhlūl (**25**) of Anbar and the tribe Tanukh, whose father is known as Abu Bakr Azraq. Abū 'Īsā, brother of Abū *S*akhrah, he said, was our neighbour in Baghdad. He was a man of vast fortune and highly respected; he was one of the leading men of the clerks' profession. He had held important offices, and had at one time served as deputy vizier to Ismā'īl b. Bulbul.[1] When Mohammed b. 'Ubaidallāh Khāqānī became vizier, he[2] made this Abū 'Īsā head of the Sawād Bureau. When Khāqānī was dismissed, and his place given to Abu'l-*H*asan 'Alī b. 'Īsā, and the latter returned from Yemen or Syria, whither he had been banished after the affair of Ibn al-Mu'tazz, and assumed the vizierate, he did not regard Abū 'Īsā as fit for the Sawād Bureau, as his technical knowledge was insufficient for the needs of this office. 'Alī b. 'Īsā was however unable to dismiss Abū 'Īsā owing to the respect wherein he was held in the palace. He used therefore to endeavour to humiliate him at his meetings, and deny him the respect which was due to the head of the Sawād Bureau. Thus if he wanted a deed drawn up by the Bureau, or an assessment of land-tax, or a balance-sheet, he would order the clerks of the Bureau to be summoned, and would address them in Abū 'Īsā's presence, without speaking to him, thereby humiliating him exceedingly. If however he wanted a deed drawn up for which he knew Abū 'Īsā's professional attainments to be inadequate, and which he would be unable to discuss, he would talk to him about it in the presence of witnesses, in order that his incompetence might be manifested to his disgrace. If he

[1] Vizier of Mu'ta*d*id. [2] See i. 21.

wanted anything of importance, he would summon the Bureau clerks and address them in order to humiliate him to the utmost. After putting up with this for a long time, one day Abū 'Īsā remained seated in his room till no-one was left there except himself and the vizier's brother, Ibrāhīm b. 'Īsā. 'Alī b. 'Īsā asked Abū 'Īsā whether he wanted anything. He said he did, only the vizier's room must be cleared first.—I am told (said my informant) that when Ibrāhīm b. 'Īsā heard this, he rose and retired. The following day (he said) when I went to my brother, I found Abū 'Īsā at the front of the meeting, where the head of the Bureau ought to be, giving orders and prohibitions, talking with the utmost ease, the conversation on the subject of the deeds being addressed to him, and not, as before, to the clerks. He was, so to speak, in heaven. I felt tempted to ask the vizier (**26**) about this. He remained in his seat till there was no-one left in the room but me ; then he said : Is there something you are going to say, my lad ?—I said : Yes, a trifle about which I should like to ask the vizier. —He said : If it is a trifle, do not ask about it.—I said I must, and he bade me proceed. I observed that on the preceding day Abū 'Īsā had solicited and been granted a private interview, and that I noticed how his treatment to-day had been the contrary of that which had previously been accorded him ; now what, I asked, is the reason ?— He said : That is so ; he addressed some remarks to me which raised my opinion of him, and, knowing that he was in the right, I have taken him into favour again. What he said at the private interview was this : Vizier, I am one of the oldest members of the clerks' profession, well aware of the limitations of my professional attainments, and that they are by no means perfect. I have not failed to notice the treatment accorded me by the vizier, his endeavours to humiliate me and expose my want of skill, his habit of addressing the clerks in the Bureau when he has business, and addressing me when there is

some insoluble problem. The vizier (God aid him) ought to know that my property is really much greater than it appears to be, great as that is, and that I have not accepted office for the sake of gain or for fear of poverty, but only to increase my dignity and to continue to be in an influential position. I have lived all these years exercising such influence, respected in my profession, never having come into hostility with any vizier, but always maintaining friendly relations with them. However much the vizier may humiliate me, he will not remove from the minds of great and small the fact that I acted as deputy-vizier to Ismā'īl b. Bulbul, and that I have held the following offices (he proceeded to enumerate the important posts which he had held) ; offices which, they know, are not entrusted to the incompetent ; nor will he be able to eradicate from them the respect which they feel for my vast possessions and estates. Neither can he do more to wreck my position than he has been doing. I have various alternatives before me. Either I shall succeed in putting a stop to this vexation by means which may perhaps distress the vizier ; or I may prefer to retain (27) his friendship, and shall offer my resignation, and stay at home, where I am by no means obscure and of no account, after which I shall take my stand as he chooses among his friends or his enemies ; or he will relieve me of his present method of treatment and go back to the sort which is due to a person in my position ; or he may relieve me from my work so that I may remain at home.—I said to him : Abū 'Īsā, after this you shall see nothing of which you disapprove, and I shall be on the most cordial terms with you.—Come early to-morrow in order that you may see the proof of this.—Hence when he came to me to-day, I treated him as you saw.

The expression of 'Alī b. 'Īsā to his brother, *If it is a trifle, do not ask me about it* corresponds with what we used to be told of his extreme gravity of demeanour, and desire to be generally respected, so that he behaved

in this style even with his wife and children. I was told by Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn al-Azraq that he had heard how one of 'Alī b. 'Īsā's elder children went to see him towards the end of his life. 'Alī b. 'Īsā was lying down ; when he saw his son, he sat up.

I was informed by my father and Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh how they had repeatedly seen 'Alī b. 'Īsā in his latter days when his saloon was crowded ; he was by an open door, with a bolster between the doorposts, against which he was leaning. Over the doorway there was a curtain let down so as to reach the ground and conceal the bolsters, which it screened from people's view. The old man kept in contact with the curtain, being unwilling, in order to preserve his dignity, to lean against anything in people's presence. To this practice he adhered.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn Abī *T*ālib Ibn Abī Ja'far b. Buhlūl as follows: When I was a lad, he said, I used to come and play in the presence of my grandfather,[1] who would shout out to me. Whenever I entered his presence, if he were uncovered, he would take his hood from the back of the bolster and put it on ; he would seat himself in a dignified attitude before me, though my age at the time was about ten, till I departed ; **(28)** I could see him removing it when I got to a distance.

The treatment by 'Alī b. 'Īsā of Abū 'Īsā brother of Abū Sakhrah resembles a story told me by a trustworthy person. I was told, he said, by a number of clerks, that 'Alī b. 'Īsā learned how it was Muqtadir's intention to dismiss him and give his place to Abu 'Alī Ibn Muqlah, who was at that time his deputy in several bureaux. 'Alī b. 'Īsā summoned Ibn Muqlah, and ordered him to draw up various deeds belonging to the bureaux. Ibn Muqlah promised to produce them. Some days later 'Alī b. 'Īsā addressed him in the presence of the people,

[1] Famous qa*d*i ; see i. 61, 76.

meaning to humiliate him : I demanded of you, he said, certain deeds, which you have not produced ; I am aware that they are beyond your capacity ; if this be the case, then confess honestly that it is so.—Ibn Muqlah replied that he had produced them, and set them before the vizier. The latter commenced their perusal, and bade the senior clerks present marvel at the errors which had been committed therein, called Ibn Muqlah's attention repeatedly to his want of technical knowledge, and reproached him concerning passage after passage which he extracted, saying to him in the course of his remarks : *This is botching, not drafting.* He placed his finger on document after document and pointed out how it ought to have been drafted. The clerks who were present were amazed at the excellence of the suggestions of 'Alī b. 'Īsā and the futility of Ibn Muqlah's, till at last the former made a pile of the whole lot, and told Ibn Muqlah to go and rewrite them in accordance with his suggestions and bring them back. Ibn Muqlah rose, and when he was out of the room the vizier said : *It is strange that such a man should profess to accomplish what nonplussed Ibn al-Furāt and is none too easy for us.*

He continues : On the fourth or fifth day after this 'Alī b. 'Īsā was arrested and put into the power of Ibn Muqlah, who was made vizier. He tried to humiliate 'Alī b. 'Īsā, but could only do it by personal violence and insults to which men of honour would not condescend. An example is furnished by the same informant (**29**). I was told, he said, by al-Fa*d*l b. 'Abd al-Ra*h*mān b. Ja'far (Abu A*h*mad Shīrāzī) how he was one day in the presence of Abu 'Alī Ibn Muqlah when the latter was vizier and 'Alī b. 'Īsā had come in and was seated in front of the vizier. There were present Abu 'Abdallāh 'Alawī Mūsawī, and Abū 'Alī *H*asan b. Hārūn. Ibn Muqlah bade the last write a petition in the name of Abu 'Abdallāh Mūsawī describing the ruin of his estate and soliciting recognition of ill-treatment with assigna-

tion of a grant. *H*asan b. Hārūn did as he had been told, and presented the document to Ibn Muqlah, who affixed his stamp, ordering an affirmative reply to be issued, and sent to the clerk, commanding him to issue it at once. This was done, and under the affirmative reply he gave orders for a grant of 20 *kurr* of wheat and the like of barley, and an acknowledgment that the applicant had been defrauded to the amount specified. He then told *H*asan b. Hārūn to deliver the document to Abu 'Abdallāh.—The people present approved of his liberality to a descendant of 'Alī, and in this approval 'Alī b. 'Īsā joined, expressing his gratitude. By way of reply Ibn Muqlah said : *Why did not you do the like when you were vizier?*—'Alī b. 'Īsā rose, saying *Good-bye, Vizier,* and made no further reply.

'Alī b. 'Īsā was anxious to display his superiority to every one else in gravity of demeanour. Several people have told me how in one of his vizierates he received a visit from the qā*d*ī Abū 'Umar, who had on him a magnificent *dabīqī* robe of Shustar manufacture. 'Alī b. 'Īsā, wishing to make him ashamed of himself, said to him: Abū 'Umar, at how much the piece did you buy the material of your tunic ?—Two hundred dinars was the reply. 'Alī b. 'Īsā said : Oh, the material out of which this *durrā'ah* of mine was cut with the tunic underneath cost twenty (**30**) dinars !—Abū 'Umar answered without hesitation, as though he had got his reply ready : *The vizier (God exalt him) beautifies his clothes, and is therefore in no need of extravagance therein , whereas we are beautified by ours, and in consequence have to be extravagant. We come in contact with the lower classes, whom we have to impress with our dignity ; whereas the vizier is served by the upper classes rather than by the lower, and it is known that he neglects this parade while well able to indulge in it.*—His reply made 'Alī b. 'Īsā feel uncomfortable, and he kept silent.

I was told the following by the qā*d*ī Abū Bakr Mohammed b. 'Abdallāh uncle of the qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn Mukram: I was, he said, on intimate terms with the vizier 'Alī b. 'Īsā, who often consulted me about his affairs. One day, when I went to see him, I found him deeply distressed. I supposed that a displeasing message had come to him from Muqtadir, and asked whether anything had happened, pointing in the direction of the Caliph. He replied that his distress was not of that sort, but more serious. I told him that if I might be allowed to know what it was perhaps I might make a suggestion. He said: Very well. Our commissioner at the frontier has written to the effect that the Moslem prisoners in Byzantine territory were well treated till recently the throne was occupied by two lads,[1] who have been oppressing the prisoners, starving them, leaving them naked, torturing them and demanding that they should turn Christian. They are in the sorest straits. This is not a matter with which I can deal, for it is not within the competence of our Sultan[2] nor of the Caliph, neither would they obey me. Otherwise I should have laid out money in equipping a force with all earnest for the invasion of Constantinople.—I said: Vizier, I have a plan for putting a stop to this state of affairs which is easier than what has occurred to you.—He said: Tell me with God's blessing.—I said: The Christians have a potentate in Antioch who is called Patriarch, and another in Jerusalem called Catholicos (**31**). The authority of these two extends over the whole Byzantine empire, so that at times they have excommunicated the Emperor himself or released him from excommunication, and these sentences have been recognised. The Byzantines hold that disobedience to these two potentates is heresy, and that

[1] If the story is historical, probably the reference is to the sons of Romanus, associated in the Empire in 926, Lebeau St. Martin xiii. 436.

[2] These words are probably corrupt, for there was as yet no "Prince of Princes," and the title Sultan was not at first taken by them.

no Emperor can be properly installed in the Byzantine Capital without their approval, without his paying homage to them and being promoted by them. Now the two cities (Jerusalem and Antioch) are within our empire and these persons are under our protection. The vizier should write to the governors of the cities to summon them and inform them of the treatment accorded to the captives, which is contrary to their doctrines, and that if a stop be not put to it they (the Patriarch and the Catholicos) will be held responsible. Let him then see what answer he will receive.—The vizier (he continued) summoned a clerk and dictated a letter on these lines, which he despatched at once. He said: You have relieved me somewhat.—We parted; after two months and some days, when I had forgotten the affair, a courier came from the vizier to summon me. I mounted my horse, feeling anxious to know the reason. When I came into his presence, I found him in a joyous mood; when he saw me, he said: My friend, God reward you well on your own account and on that of your religion and on mine.—I asked what the news were.—He said: Your suggestion about the captives was most fortunate and wise. Here is the governor's envoy who has just brought us information. Pointing to a man who was present he bade him state what had occurred.—The man said: I was sent by the governor with the envoy of the Patriarch and the Catholicos, bringing their despatches to Constantinople and their letters to the two emperors. They were to the following effect: *By your treatment of the captives you have violated the Christian religion. You have no right to treat them thus, seeing that such conduct is contrary to the precepts of Christ* (here a number of texts were cited). Either you shall put a stop to this treatment and instead treat them with kindness and cease demanding that they should become Christian, *Or we from our two thrones shall curse and excommunicate you.* I travelled (he proceeded) with the envoy, and when we reached Constantinople,

for some days (**32**) I was not admitted to the presence of the emperors. They gave the envoy however a private audience. Then they summoned me, and I saluted, after which their interpreter said to me: The emperors would have you know that what has been told you concerning our treatment of the prisoners is a false and malicious charge. We have given leave for your admission to the Palace[1] that you may inspect your prisoners and you will find their condition very different from what you have been told, and hear expressions of their gratitude to us which will be unlike what has reached you. —I was then taken to the Palace, where I saw the prisoners. Their faces looked as though they had been taken out of the grave, and bore evidence of suffering. Only just then they were enjoying comfort, and when I looked at their clothing, I noticed that it was all new. So I gathered that I had been refused an audience during those days in order that there might be time to alter the appearance of the captives. The captives said to me: We are grateful to their Majesties, and may God reward them well. At the same time they indicated to us by signs that the facts were what we had been told, only there had been alleviation and amelioration since our arrival. They asked me how I had learned about them, *whose* attention had been called to their case and who had sent me on their account? I replied: *'Ali b. 'Isa has been appointed vizier, and he, being informed of the matter, sent from Baghdad, and did one thing and another.* They proceeded to lavish blessings on the vizier, and I heard a woman say: *Well done, 'Alī b. 'Īsā, may God not forget what you have done!*

When 'Alī b. 'Īsā heard this story, he burst into tears, and prostrated himself in thankfulness to God Almighty. He then gave a gratuity to the messenger and dismissed him. I said to him: Vizier, I am constantly hearing

[1] A description of the Imperial Palace is given by W. G. Holmes, *The Age of Justinian and Theodora*, i. 49, ed. 2: but at a period long before this.

you in private say how weary you are of the vizierate and how gladly you would be released from it, for fear of the guilt which it may involve upon you. If you were a private person, could you acquire such merit as this, even if you spent the bulk of your fortune ? Talk no more in that style, for perhaps God may give you the power to do the like of this many another time, (**33**) so that you will secure His reward in the future life, just as you have the unique honour of the vizierate in this.

I was told by Abu Mohammed 'Abdallāh b. A*h*mad b. Dāssah of Basrah how he had been informed by 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. *H*ammād the qā*d*ī that a certain Arab Sheikh told him of a Moslem who had been in captivity and afterwards returned to Islamic soil. This man told the following story : When, he said, we were being conveyed in the Byzantine country we endured much suffering and for a number of nights were unable to sleep for the cold, till we nearly perished. Then we entered a village where a monk brought us clothing and heavy warm blankets, one of which he distributed to each of the captives. That night gave us a fresh lease of life, and we passed some days in the village, being treated in this style. Then they withdrew us to another, where we were naked and cold as before. We asked the reason of this and were told that a Baghdad trader named Ibn Rizq Allah, brother-in-law of Ibn Abī 'Aun [1] had made arrangements whereby these garments and blankets had at great cost been lodged with the monk, who had been requested to cover with them any Moslem prisoners who might be brought to his village ; in return for which service the trader undertook to spend certain sums on a church situated in Islamic territory so long as these articles were kept for the use of the captives. The monk accordingly kept up the practice in this village ; but in the villages behind and in front there was no such pro-

[1] Famous member of the 'Azaqiri sect, of whom there is a biography in *Irshad al-Arib* i. 296.

vision.—We started invoking blessings on Ibn Rizq Allah each time we felt the cold or experienced the discomfort, though we did not know him personally.

I was told by Abu'l-*H*asan 'Abdallāh b. A*h*mad b. 'Abbās the qā*d*ī how a certain man, after continuous unemployment, forged letters in the name of 'Alī b. Mohammed b. al-Furāt (vizier at the time) to Abū Zunbūr governor of Egypt. The man went thither and brought this letter to the governor, who suspected its genuineness owing to the emphasis of its language and the number of blessings which it invoked on the bearer, whose rank did not justify such formalities (**34**) ; he was also dissatisfied with the style. He accordingly bestowed on the man a small largess, and ordered a pension to be given him, which he was to enjoy till the governor had considered the matter. The latter then sent the letter in his private bag to Ibn al-Furāt, explaining the situation. The forged letter contained the statement that the man had rendered a service to the vizier in old times which involved a serious obligation. The packet reached Ibn al-Furāt when his friends were with him. After explaining the situation and exciting their wonder he asked what ought to be done to the man. One suggested that his hand should be amputated as a punishment for counterfeiting the vizier's writing. Another that his thumb should be amputated ; another that he should be flogged and imprisoned ; another that Abu Zunbūr should be enlightened on the matter and told to remove him from his court ; it would be sufficient if after taking all this trouble the man got nothing. Ibn al-Furāt said : What illiberal and disagreeable dispositions you all have ! Here is a man who tries to conjure with our name, has taken the trouble of a journey to Egypt, hoping to find a source of wealth in our repute, and perhaps having no access to us nor any hold upon us whereby he could get a letter from us has relieved us of the trouble by writing on his own account a letter which he thought

would serve his purpose : who has then set forth in search of fortune making of us his lever :—is disappointment to be the best thing which such a man should experience according to the kindliest of you in mind ? Putting his pen into the ink, he turned the forged letter over and wrote upon it in his own hand : *This is my letter and I do not know why you suspected its genuineness, or how you came to conceive doubts about it. Do you really know every one who did us a service at the time of our reverse, and the old days when we went into hiding ? Are you really acquainted with them all, and so inclined to suspect ? Now this excellent person is one of them, and his claim upon me is greater than is stated in this letter, and the bond which attaches me to him stronger ; so give him a liberal present, look constantly after his interests and give him the best government appointment for which he is fit.* He added further recommendation of the sort and sent off the letter at once. After a considerable period Ibn al-Furāt was visited by a man of fine appearance, well dressed and well attended. He began to invoke blessings on the vizier, shedding tears and kissing the ground before him. Ibn al-Furāt did not know him (**35**) and said : God bless you, sir (that was his phrase), what is the matter with you ?—He said : I am the forger of the letter to Abū Zunbūr which the charity of the vizier (God reward him !) declared genuine.—Ibn al-Furāt laughed and asked how much Abu Zunbūr had given him. He replied : Out of his private property, an allowance from public funds which he made me, and an office in which he employed me, I have received 20,000 dinars. Ibn al-Furāt said : God be praised ; stay with me, and I will see that you get many times that amount.—The man assented ; Ibn al-Furāt, having found him by trial to possess a clerk's qualifications, took him into his service and enabled him to gain such a fortune as secured his attachment.

I was told the following by Abu A*h*mad Ibn Abi'l-Ward : I was informed, he said, by my father, who was

on intimate terms with the qā*d*ī Abū 'Umar that a letter was forged in his name to Abu'l-Qāsim Ibn al-*H*awārī by a man who was soliciting an appointment. The two were good friends. The man brought his note to Ibn al-*H*awārī; it was taken, but he was not himself admitted, so he sat waiting for the answer. It happened that the qā*d*ī Abū 'Umar came at the time accompanied by me, to pay his respects to Ibn al-*H*awārī. We were admitted, and the qā*d*ī found the letter there, wherein his writing was counterfeited. He was surprised and wanted to know the facts of the case; but his gravity of demeanour, which was indeed proverbial, was such that he let no hint of this be perceived by Ibn al-*H*awārī. I, having had experience of his ways, perceived the truth. Presently Ibn al-*H*awārī noticed the letter in his hand, and said: Qā*d*ī, this has just arrived, and I will do what you want for the man.—Abū 'Umar thanked him, expressing himself in such a manner as to let the other suppose it was his letter without definitely stating it. He was an adept at this sort of thing, a master of the art of using ambiguous phrases, which required interpretation, and which he employed out of caution and astuteness. He went on to say: If the man is about, let him be summoned and brought in. This was done, and the man was brought in, being ashy pale. Ibn al-*H*awārī asked him if he were the bearer of the honourable qā*d*ī's letter. He replied that he was. Abū 'Umar (**36**) said to him: His excellency has promised to give you employment and to look after your interests, so attach yourself to him.—After interchanging some remarks, Abū 'Umar rose, but whispered to me to bring the man to him. I stopped behind, put the man at his ease, and then brought him to the qā*d*ī, who was sitting waiting for us. Abū 'Umar said to him: What, do you counterfeit my writing, mine, a ruler, whose writing is authoritative over property, honour and life? What right had you to suppose that I would not expose you to Ibn al-*H*awārī, in which case

you would have received exemplary punishment ?—The man burst into tears and said : Qā*d*ī, what induced me to this course was indigence, extreme poverty, and confidence in your generosity, should it ever come to your knowledge, inasmuch as the matter involved no question of law or evidence ; I calculated moreover that the matter would never reach you, and that I would profit without harm to you. Abū 'Umar asked if he were prepared to swear that poverty had been his motive. The man said he was prepared. Abū 'Umar burst into tears, and whispered to a servant, who after a short absence returned bringing a purse containing a hundred dinars and a cloth containing a suit of clothes. Handing these to the man, Abū 'Umar bade him make use of the first and put on the second, and attach himself to Ibn al-*H*awārī. I, he said, will urge your claims, only swear that you will never again counterfeit my writing.—The man took an oath to this effect, and departed. Some months later he paid a complimentary visit to Abū 'Umar, well mounted and handsomely attired. He began to thank Abū 'Umar and invoke blessings on him. Abū 'Umar did not recognize the man, though I did, and asked him for what he was giving thanks. He replied that he was the forger of the letter to Ibn al-*H*awārī, the man whom the Qā*d*ī had enriched out of his purse, and resuscitated by his great name. All this time, he added, I have been employed by Ibn al-*H*awārī, and so have attained this position. I shall always pray God on behalf of the qā*d*ī. —Abū 'Umar said : Praise God for His guidance.

I was informed by the qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh as follows : I saw a friend of mine, he said, seated on one of the pontoons of the Bridge in Baghdad on a very windy day, writing. I said : (**37**) What, writing in this place and in such weather !—He replied : I want to counterfeit the writing of a man whose hand shakes, and my hand proving unequal to the task, I decided to sit down here, so that the motion of the

pontoon caused by the gale should make my writing shaky like that which I am counterfeiting.

I was told by the same Abu'l-*H*usain how he had been in the presence of Abū 'Alī Ibn Muqlah, who was vizier at the time, when a number of allocations and deeds were presented to him, which had been forged by his brother Abū 'Abdallāh in his name. Abū 'Abdallāh was present at the time. Abū 'Alī was unwilling to expose his brother, but when he found them very numerous, he said to him: Abū 'Abdallāh, you have been lightening our burden so much that you have become a burden yourself; I am afraid we may become a burden on you, so I would prefer your relieving yourself of this trouble.—Abū 'Abdallāh laughed and declared that he would obey the vizier's orders.

I was informed by the qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan 'Alī b. Mohammed b. A*h*mad b. Is*h*aq b. Buhlūl Tanūkhī as follows: Abu'l-Fat*h* al-Fa*d*l b. Ja'far b. al-Furāt went into hiding with my father in our dwellings.[1] I was a lad at the time, and he used often to call for me to talk with him, and I would play chess with him. He said to me one day when we were discussing the deficit in Muqtadir's budget: I have been considering, and find the revenue of the empire to be so much. The estates of my uncle Abu'l-*H*asan[2] at the time of their seizure together with those of our own which were seized at the same time were worth so much. Their present value is one third of that. Had I possession of our estates only, I should get them under cultivation and restore their productivity to what it was. The excess would astound the world. Now our estates are only a mite in the earth, so what would be the case if the whole world had some one to look after its cultivation?

The qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan observed that he had never heard a larger amount, and this was before Abu'l-Fat*h*

[1] See i. 272. [2] The famous vizier Ibn al-Furāt.

was appointed to the vizierate. Abu'l-*H*asan remembered the sums, but I have forgotten them.

(**38**) I was told by my late father how he had heard that once when Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn al-Furāt was still of moderate station, as he was riding down a narrow lane, preceded by two slaves, he came under the stream from the gutter of a house, which rendered him a spectacle. He told one of his slaves to find a place which he could enter. The slave knocked at the door of a house. Its occupant was a tailor. When he saw the stately appearance of Ibn al-Furāt he treated him with servile respect, bade him enter and seat himself, and took his clothes which he gave to his wife to wash ; he himself sat with him and conversed, while the other slave hurried to Ibn al-Furāt's house and brought him another suit of clothes before the woman had finished washing the others. Ibn al-Furāt dressed himself in these, ordered the others to be left with the people and departed. Time worked its changes, and presently Ibn al-Furāt was appointed to his first vizierate. One day he was passing on horseback in a great procession, and the people all stood up to see him, the tailor among them. When he saw Ibn al-Furāt, he told the people of his street how he had had an adventure with this person, which he narrated to them. They told him that Ibn al-Furāt was a generous man, and, they said, If you visit him, it will be of advantage to you.—The following day the tailor went to the vizier's palace, and his arrival at the gate coincided with Ibn al-Furāt's mounting his horse. He invoked a blessing on the vizier, and added that he had a claim upon the vizier. Ibn al-Furāt, glancing at the man, recognized him, and remembering the adventure, bade him be seated. On his return from his ride he summoned the tailor, asked about himself, his wife, and his children, and then said to him : Which would you sooner have, a remuneration or a post in our service ?—The man said he preferred the service of the vizier. Ibn al-Furāt ordered that a

thousand dinars should be given him, and that he should be appointed head of the tailors in his palace. These instructions were carried out, and ere long he had become possessor of tens of thousands.

I myself witnessed something similar to this in the case of the late vizier Muhallabi. 'Abd al-Ra*h*mān b. Na*s*r Sukkarī of Basrah, friend of the Barīdīs, repeatedly prefect of police in Basrah, invited Muhallabī (during the latter's vizierate [1] to his house in Mirbad Street, and Muhallabi went there. (**39**) When he wished to go home to Mismārān where his quarters were, having been drinking, he did not like to pass the Mosque, so he turned down some lanes to Sai*h*an, meaning to enter his barge there. When he got to the place where jugs are manufactured, he found it necessary to retire into the dwelling of some humble people. After doing what he wanted he summoned the master of the house and asked whether it was his property. The man said it was hired. The vizier asked what rent he paid. Five dirhems a month, he replied. What is its value ? the vizier asked. Five hundred dirhems was the answer. What, the vizier asked, is your capital as jug-manufacturer ? A hundred dirhems, he answered. The vizier at once gave him a thousand dirhems, bidding him purchase the house and increase his capital with the remainder. He then mounted.

He was indeed one of the last of the munificent. In the month Rama*d*an of the year 351 [2] I witnessed a scene which might have been a performance of the Barmecides. I never saw the like before or after. His clerk of the Sawad Bureau, Abu'l-*H*usain 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Ibrāhīm, known as Son of Nu'man's Chamberlain, had fallen from a balcony in the palace of Muhallabi which overlooked the Tigris, and expired on the eighth day from his fall. Muhallabi was deeply affected by his death, and paid a

[1] See ii. 128. [2] Began Oct. 3 962.

visit to his children the day after, as they had buried him in the evening. I was in his company. He consoled them in the most charming style and promised to look after them. I, he said, am now your father, and in the departed you have only lost his personality.—Addressing his eldest son Abū 'Abdallāh he said : I appoint you to your father's post, and entrust you with his business. I also am giving a post to your brother Abu'l-*H*usain (at that time a lad of about ten) with a stipend of (he named a large sum which I have forgotten), and hope he will be the companion of my boy, as their ages are about the same. The two can pursue their studies and grow up together, and he will have a claim upon him. He then said to Abu'l 'Alā *S*ā'id b. (**40**) Thābit, the deputy vizier : Write a deed of appointment for Abū 'Abdallāh, and summon all those from whom the late Abu'l-*H*usain held leases, bidding them renew those leases with his heirs ; for the greater part of his fortune consisted in rights of entry, leases, and farms, all of which are cancelled by his death.[1] If any owner objects, then increase the rents at my expense, implore him, and refuse to be satisfied except with a renewal of the contracts, on any terms. He then said to the brother-in-law of the deceased, Abu'l-Makārim Ibn Warqā : The late Abu'l-*H*usain's dependents were numerous, and I am aware that he was in the habit of making large monthly allowances to his sisters, their children and other relatives. His death will mean ruin to them, as they have no share in his estate. Please go to the daughter of Abū Mohammed Mādarā'ī (meaning the widow of the deceased), offer her condolence, and make out at her dictation a list of all the women to whom the late Abu'l-*H*usain gave allowances, and of the men and the poorer members of his household as well. He added, addressing Abu'l-'Alā : When he brings you the list, pay out a month's allowance at once and give

[1] The terms in the text are not quite clear. Apparently the two first represent modes of speculating in house-property.

orders that the sums be paid regularly.—The list came to over 3,000 dirhems a month, and that amount was immediately disbursed, while the rest of the vizier's instructions were also carried out.—Tears were in every eye, so deeply were people moved, and so highly did they appreciate this action. I saw on that day the 'Alawid Missionary Abu 'Abdallāh Mohammed b. *H*asan, who was present at the scene; he was weeping copiously and was loud, indeed excessive, in his praise of Muhallabī, though a man of few words, save about his own concerns, and with a low opinion of Muhallabī; he was however overcome by this heroism, and their mutual relations did not prevent him from uttering the truth. I said to Muhallabī on that day: If death could be welcome at any time, it would be so to the man with many encumbrances in the days of our master the vizier. This performance constitutes an epoch in munificence, and confirms the tales told of the patterns of bounty in ancient times:—with such other compliments as I could extemporize. Muhallabī then rose to go; loud cries of gratitude and benediction were raised by the women, the men, the household and the whole street.

I was informed by Abu Mohammed Ya*h*ya b. Sulaimān b. Fahd of the tribe Azd and of Mausil, that his father Abu 'Abdallāh had acted as intermediary between Abū Mohammed Muhallabī and Nāsir al-daulah in the matter of some money which was to be transmitted by the latter to Mu'izz al-daulah as part of the payment due by the convention concerning Mausil.[1] Of this money Abu 'Abdallāh expended 40,000 dirhems owing to an emergency. Muhallabī, who was on terms of cordial friendship with Abu 'Abdallāh, not knowing of this, gave a draft upon him for the whole sum. Abu 'Abdallāh paid up all that he had retained, and postponed payment of what he had spent. One day when he was seated in

[1] See ii. 203.

his house, thinking out an expedient for repaying the rest, he received an invitation from Muhallabī to a drinking party. He tried to put it off; but as the message was repeated, he embarked, and the two after a meal sat down to drink. Abū 'Alī Anbārī[1] said to Abu 'Abdallāh: My friend, you seem low-spirited.—The two being on good terms, and the one the father-in-law of the other, Abū 'Abdallāh told Abū 'Alī the facts, and how his mind was occupied and would remain so till he could make up and return the sum; he begged him however to keep the matter secret. Muhallabī noticed the same lack of spirits in Abū 'Abdallāh and asked him about it; but he gave an evasive answer, being too proud to state the real reason. Muhallabī did not pursue the subject, and presently Abu 'Abdallāh retired for a time. Muhallabī then said to Abū 'Alī Anbārī: Have you noticed the poor spirits of Abū 'Abdallāh? He is your friend; I observed him whispering to you, and I fancy he must have revealed to you the cause of his languor. What is it?—Abū 'Alī told him. When Abū 'Abdallāh returned, Muhallabī said to him: My friend, you have not satisfied the claims of affection in my case or those of wisdom in your own. You are worried about 40,000 dirhems for which I can give you a discharge, and have concealed this from me as though (**42**) you owed them to a stranger, or were bound to pay. Muhallabī disapproved such conduct, and Abū 'Abdallāh at first denied the allegation, and frowned at Abū 'Alī; presently however he made a clean breast. Muhallabī told Abū 'Alī to order the collector to write Abū 'Abdallāh a receipt for the sum without delay, and devise headings under which this sum could be introduced into the debit columns, inventing charges which should fall (of course) on Mu'izz al-daulah; so that, he said, Abū 'Abdallāh may be quit while we shall not be liable.—Summoning the Collector, Abū 'Alī obtained the receipt which he handed to Abū 'Abdallāh. Muhallabī then

[1] See ii. 54.

said to him : Now what harm has this done to either you or me ? A weight of worry has fallen from you, and another from me in discharging some of my obligations ; and the money has come out of the Prince's pocket ! Now let us go back to our cups.—Abū 'Abdallāh stayed with him the whole of that night, and was relieved of the debt.

I have been informed by a number of Muhallabī's associates that on a certain night Muhallabī distributed among them and a number of singers, entertainers, etc. who were present, coin and raiment to the value of 5,000 dinars. I myself more than once saw him give Juhanī[1] and Abu'l-Faraj Ispahānī 5,000 dinars, and constantly bestow presents on others.

I was told by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh after Abu Is*h*āq Ibrāhīm Ibn al-Sarī Zājjāj as follows : I was (said Zajjāj) tutor to Qāsim son of 'Ubaidallāh, and used to say to him : If God should raise you to your father's station and you become vizier, what will you do for me ? He would ask in reply what would I like ? I used to say : I should like you to give me 20,000 dinars. That was the limit of my desires. He assented. Only a few years passed and Qāsim became vizier.[2] I was still in attendance upon him, having become his messmate. I felt inclined to remind him of his promise, but was afraid to do so. Presently, on the third day (**43**) of his office, he said to me : Abū Is*h*āq, I notice that you have not reminded me of my vow.—I replied that I relied on the vizier's sense of duty, feeling sure that he would need no reminder of an undertaking that he had made with a meritorious servant.—He said : It is Mu'ta*d*id, otherwise I should find no difficulty in paying you the whole in a lump. I am afraid however that I should have to talk to him about it ; kindly therefore take it in instalments. —I told him I was ready to do so. He said : Take your

[1] See i. 258.

[2] Apparently in 289 A.H.

seat where you can receive people's petitions on important subjects, taking your fee for doing so. Do not shrink from bringing before me any matter about which you are approached, whether it be possible or impossible, until you have made up the amount promised you by me. I carried out this proposal, and day after day used to bring before him a number of petitions, which he would stamp, at times asking how much had been promised me for getting this done ; when I named the sum, he would tell me that I had been cheated, as it was worth more, and I had better go back and raise my terms. In such cases I would go back to the petitioners and bargain with them till they offered what he had named. I (he continued) brought a vast number before him, and got together the 20,000 dinars in a short space of time. After some months he asked me whether I had made up the amount promised. I said I had not. He said nothing, and I went on presenting and was asked by him about once a month whether the sum had been made up, and always said no, for fear my trade should be stopped. Ultimately, when I had accumulated twice the sum, he asked me one day the old question, and being ashamed of continuous mendacity, I replied that by the Vizier's blessing the sum had been made up.—You have eased me of a burden, he replied, for I assure you that I have had it on my mind till it was realized.—Taking the inkstand he proceeded to make out a draft for me on his treasurer for 3,000 dinars as a present. Having taken this I desisted from presenting any more petitions, not knowing how he would take it. The following day I went to him and took my usual seat. He made me a sign (**44**) to present the documents as usual. I replied that I had not accepted any from any one, for as the sum promised me had been paid in full, I did not know how the vizier would take my continuing to present.—Good heavens ! he replied ; did you think I was going to withdraw from you a practice which has become your own and about

which people know, which has given you importance in their eyes, and made them throng your door morning and evening ? The cause of its withdrawal being unknown, they will suppose that it is due to the loss of my favour or your degradation. Go on presenting as usual, and take your fees, rendering no account.—I kissed his hand, recommenced presenting petitions the following day, and did so daily till his death.

The following was told me by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh : I was informed, he said, by one of our sheikhs (he mentioned his name, but it has escaped me) ; I was told, he said, by Abu 'Abdallāh Ibn Abī 'Auf that 'Ubaidallah b. Sulaiman [1] had hidden in his house. One day, he said, I visited him in a chamber of my house which I had set apart for his use. He stood up to welcome me ; I thoughtlessly and jestingly remarked : Sir, keep this in store for the time when I shall profit by it.—Only a few days elapsed before he was appointed vizier, and my family said I had better visit him. Although I was at the time in low water, I rejected their advice. I am, I told them, in no danger, and a visit paid by me at this time would seem like a demand for payment of a kindness bestowed upon him. I cannot consent to such a proceeding, and if he meant to do me any service, he would have taken the first step.—I passed that night meditating, this having been the day whereon decorations were distributed. When it was morning, a courier arrived bearing an autograph letter from him, wherein he remonstrated with me for failing to put in an appearance, and bade me come. I went and found him seated with a concourse of people in his presence. When I came near his throne, he rose (**45**) to his full height to greet me, and after embracing me, whispered into my ear : This is the time when you will profit by my rising in your honour.—He then sat down and bade me seat myself by him on

[1] Vizier of Mu'ta*d*id, ob. 288.

the platform ; I kissed his hand, and offered him congratulations and blessings. After a little time, being summoned by Mu'ta*d*id, he rose, but bade me remain where I was. I kept my seat, all eyes were turned on me, and I was addressed in the most respectful style and treated with distinction. Presently 'Ubaidallāh returned smiling, and taking me by the hand drew me to the private audience chamber, where he said : Do you know that the Caliph summoned me on your account, having received a written message to the effect that I had risen to greet you in the Saloon of the Vizierate ? He has just summoned me to remonstrate with me on this procedure, saying : Do you degrade the Saloon of the Vizierate by rising in honour of a tradesman ? If it had been a provincial ruler, it would have been unlawful ; had it been an heir apparent, it would have been too much.—He was proceeding to go further when I said : Commander of the Faithful, I am by no means oblivious of the rights of the Saloon and the privileges of rank ; I have however an excuse, which perhaps the Commander of the Faithful will think fit to hear before he judges me.—I then told him of what had passed between us at the time when I was hiding in your house. He said : On this occasion I excuse you, but do not let it happen again.—I then came away. 'Ubaidallāh then proceeded to say to me : Abū 'Abdallāh, I have now secured you such notoriety that unless you have a hundred thousand dinars in readiness for a reverse of fortune, you are a ruined man. We must secure that sum for you to be used in such an emergency only, and in addition furnish you with a fortune which shall be sufficient for you and your descendants —I replied that I was the vizier's humble slave and dependent.—He ordered a certain clerk to be summoned, and when he had come told him to call the dealers immediately and bargain with them so as to fix the price of a hundred thousand *kurr* of produce belonging to the Sultan in the Sawad, and then inform him.—The clerk

left the room and after a time returned stating that he had arranged the matter with them. The vizier then told the clerk to sell this hundred thousand *kurr* to Abū 'Abdallah at a reduction of one dinar per *kurr* on the price fixed with the dealers, and sell the same for Abū 'Abdallah to the dealers at the price on which they had agreed; they were further to be asked to pay down the difference at once, while deferring the remaining payment till the produce had been delivered. (**46**) He was also to send orders to the districts that the produce should be delivered to them.—Abū 'Abdallāh proceeded: This was done, and thus on part of one day I became master of a hundred thousand dinars without having done anything. The vizier then said to me: Make this the foundation of your fortune and a store against the evil day. And whenever any one asks you, take his petition, agree with him on a fee for yourself, and speak to me.—He proceeded: So I used to present to him every day petitions on which I earned thousands of dinars, acted as intermediary in important negotiations, and took a hand in lucrative affairs, till my fortune reached its present figure. At times when I presented a petition to him he would ask how much I had been promised upon it. When I told him, he would say: That is an error, it is worth so much (naming a larger amount). Go back and raise your terms.—I would reply that I was ashamed to do so. He would say: Tell them that I will not assent to your application on this matter unless the fee be what I have said, and that I myself have fixed it.—I would then go back, demand the suggested increase, and get it.

I was informed by my father that he had been told the following by the Qā*d*ī Abū 'Umar: I was in the company, he said, of the Qā*d*ī Ismā'īl when he presented certain people's petitions to 'Ubaidallāh b. Sulaimān, who stamped them. He then presented another; only, fearing that he was giving trouble, he said: If it is possible for the vizier whom God aid to do this favour. The

vizier signed. The Qāḍī then presented another, adding: If the vizier can possibly assent to this. The vizier signed. He then presented another, saying: If it is convenient to the vizier to do this. The vizier signed. Then he presented another, with some similar expression, and 'Ubaidallāh said to him: Abū Ishāq, how many times are you going to say *If possible, If convenient, If admissible* and the like? Whoever tells you that he is sitting in this chair, and that anything on the face of the earth is impossible for him tells you false. Bring the whole lot of petitions at once.—Ismā'īl (he said) then produced them from his sleeve, and flung the lot before him, and the vizier signed them. Including those which had been presented before they were (**47**) about eighty in number.

I was told by *H*usain b. *H*asan Wāthiqī that he used constantly to see Abū Mohammed JA'FAR B. WARQA presenting a number of petitions from people to Abu 'Alī Ibn Muqlah when he was vizier, at both public and private audiences. Sometimes more than a hundred petitions were presented on one day. One day at a private audience he presented a great number, till Abū 'Alī growing weary asked him how long he was going on. Ja'far was vexed and replied: God help the vizier, if there is anything of mine among them, tear it up! You are the world and we are paths to you. At your gate are the widow, the weakling, the poor and the indigent, people who cannot approach you, so that when they ask, we ask for them. If you find this trying, then let the vizier order us to present nothing to him, and we shall inform the people how wearisome he finds their applications, and in what low esteem he holds us, so that they may excuse us.—Abū 'Alī replied: Abū Mohammed, I did not mean what you thought, but merely that these numerous petitions might have been presented at two audiences, or at a public audience attended by clerks, who might sign them for me. If they had been concerns

of your own, I would have been only too glad to settle them. So hand them over.—He proceeded to take the lot and sign them in favour of the petitioners. Ja'far thanked him, kissed his hand, and withdrew.

I was informed by AL-FA*D*L B. A*H*MAD *H*AYYANI that he had been told the following by Abu Bakr Shāfi'i, friend of 'Alī b. 'Īsā. When (he said) we had escaped from our fining by Mu*h*assin b. Furāt after the annoyance, loss, and torment which he had inflicted on me on account of my association with 'Alī b. 'Īsā, and the latter had come into power, I wanted to profit by presenting petitions to him and recoup myself by what I got thence for some of what I had lost by the fine. So I took a number of papers (**48**) and used to present them to 'Alī b. 'Īsā, who would sign them. One day when I presented a great number, he showed weariness. I said to him: Vizier, if we are to be cuffed in the days of your adversity, and to be refused in the days of your ministry, when, I should like to know, are we to gain anything?—The vizier, he said, laughed, signed the lot for me, and never afterwards displayed weariness when I presented them.

I was told by Abu'l-Sariyy 'Umar b. Mohammed the Reader that he had been informed by Abu'l-Qāsim 'Īsā son of 'Alī b. 'Īsā of the following anecdote recounted by his father. A petition containing an impossible proposal, he said, was presented to me in one of my ministries by Abu Bakr Mohammed b. *H*asan b. 'Abd al-'Aziz Hāshimī, who kissed my hand. I was anxious to grant it and left the petition for the moment, thinking how I could achieve this without being reprimanded. It occurred to me to mount,[1] when Mohammed b. *H*asan seized my hand and said: May I be no descendant of 'Abbās, if I let the vizier go before he has signed this paper, or else kissed my hand as I kissed his. Standing up I signed the paper, but marvelled at his unmannerliness and impudence.

[1] Either his horse or his barge.

I myself saw this Mohammed b. *H*asan in the year **350** (**961**) after both he and his family had been the victims of fortune. He was in the presence of Abū Mohammed Muhallabī. The bandits had created a disturbance in Baghdad, and brought about serious rioting, of which the Banū Hāshim had provided the occasion. They locked the Mosque in the City and there was no service that Friday. The occasion was a brawl between an 'Abbāsid and an 'Alid over their wine in the Trench of *T*ahir.[1] The 'Alid was killed, his people demanded vengeance, there was a tumult wherein the populace took part. Things became so serious that the Dailemites were stationed in the quarters[2]; but this did not allay the disturbance. Muhallabi thereupon arrested most of the descendants of 'Abbās, notables, respectable citizens, bandits and criminals of the family. Among the persons (**49**) arrested were a number of Hāshimite judges, Witnesses and saints. Among the persons arrested was Mohammed b. *H*asan b. 'Abd al-'Aziz. The vizier Muhallabī sat on a certain day to examine them, and asked them to name those of their number who were brigands, were "young"[3] and carried knives, that he might arrest these and release the others, that the respectable among them might guarantee the conduct of the miscreants, and keep them in order that the fire of civil war might be extinguished. The Hāshimite Qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan Mohammed b. *S*āli*h* was present and began to talk in judicious style with a view to preventing this, and to mollify Muhallabi, whom he treated respectfully. He was interrupted by Mohammed b. *H*asan, who used harsh, coarse and violent language. I heard Muhallabī say to him: You —— you do not desist from your stupidity in spite of the threads that are on your head.[4] As though I do not know your past and present. I

[1] See Le Strange's *Baghdad*. [2] Probably in lieu of the ordinary police.
[3] *i.e.* of military age. [4] *i.e.* the white hairs.

know your folly and your father's, your contempt for the vizier's court, and your anxiety to be able to say *The vizier said and I said to him.* You appear to suppose that Muqtadir is on the throne, and that I am one of his viziers, and not to be aware that it is the Dailemite prince Mu'izz al-daulah who occupies it to-day, who would regard the shedding of your blood as a means to propitiate the deity, and values you no more than he values a dog ! Seize his leg, slaves !—He was dragged by the leg in our presence, and I saw the tall cap which had been on his head on the ground. Muhallabī then bade them put him into a covered boat (*zauraq*) and exile him to Oman. He was set in the boat, which was directed down stream, and the people kissed his hand. The Caliph Mu*t*ī' sent to supplicate the vizier in his favour, and messages were interchanged till the vizier pardoned him, only commanded him to remain in his house, and took a bond from his family for all that he had previously imposed upon them and which they had declined to undertake. He then made a selection of Hāshimite lads and others of the populace, with various rogues and fanatics, placed them in covered boats, which he had nailed up and despatched to (**50**) Basinna and Birudh,[1] where he had them confined in cells that were there, and dwellings that resembled forts. There they remained till Muhallabī's death. Some of them died in prison, and a few of them who remained were released some years after his death. The sedition was quieted and has not again broken out up till now.

I was told by Abu'l-Qāsim *H*asan b. Bishr Amidī[2] clerk to the judges of the 'Abd al-Wāhid family in Basrah, an excellent poet, well versed in literature, which he knew by heart, recited and wrote about, that he had heard the following from Abū Is*h*āq Zajjāj : One night, he said, we were in the company of Qāsim b. 'Ubaidallah,

[1] Places in the district of Ahwaz.

[2] Author of the well-known Comparison between Abu Tammam and Bu*h*turí.

who was vizier at the time. His slave-girl Bid'ah sang the following couplet :—

She coquetted and Oh, what a noble coquette ! And Oh, what a cruel shedder of my blood !
When she tyrannizes, I in turn humiliate myself, and that is the utmost I can do.

She sang it beautifully, and delighted Qāsim, who admired both the tune and the words, particularly the latter. Bid'ah then said : My master, these verses have a story connected with them that is prettier than they are. He asked what it was. She said that it was the property of the Qā*d*ī Abū *H*āzim.—This (he said) astonished us, knowing the extreme strictness, chastity and self-restraint of Abū *H*āzim. The vizier adjured Zajjāj to go next morning to Abu *H*āzim and ask him about the origin of these verses. I (said Zajjāj) did so, and waited till Abū *H*āzim was at liberty, and there remained with him only one individual dressed as a qā*d*ī, wearing a tall cap. I said that there was something I wanted to speak about privately. He replied that I might proceed, as the person present was not one from whom he concealed anything. I recounted the story and asked him about the verses and their occasion. He smiled, and said : These are verses which I composed in my youthful days about this lad's mother (pointing to the qā*d*ī who was sitting, and who, (**51**) it appeared, was his son). I was devoted to her, and she, though my slave, was the mistress of my heart. For many years I have had no acquaintance with such matters, and have composed no verses for a long time. I ask God's forgiveness for what has passed.—The lad was embarrassed and ashamed, and perspired freely. I returned to Qāsim, and told him the story. The embarrassment of the young man amused him, and he said : If any one could escape the tender passion, it should be the misogynist Abū *H*āzim, and this we repeated to each other for some time.

The following verses were recited to me by Abu

Is*h*āq Ibrāhīm Nisībīnī the Metaphysician, 'Abd al-Wā*h*id b. Nasr Babbaghā and others: they had heard them, they said, from the 'Alid Abū 'Abdallāh Ibn al-Abya*d* in Syria, as his own composition.

I am a son of the meeting-place of the low grounds;[1] it embraces me like a pearl in the shells of a foaming sea.
Its Pillar and *Hatim* part to let me out as the lids let the black pupil appear.
My honour is like its hills; and my character like its levels, while my neighbour is like its antelopes.[2]

The following was recited to me by Ja'far b. *T*al*h*ah b. 'Ubaidallah *T*ā'ī of Baghdad, known also as Ibn Qannāsh Jauharī, being his own composition:

I am thirsty, give me a draught of it; I am an ally of pride.
Don't you see the Tigris trailing as it were the robes of coquetry?
Glorying in its palaces on right and left,
And in waters whereof the flood imitates a gazelle's back.

Abu'l-*H*asan b. 'Abd al-Wā*h*id, a well-read man, recited to me the following lines of his own about the Tambour-player *T*arfān:

(52) I said to *T*arfān: Aren't you ashamed of yourself? Your trade of parasite is associated with despair.
Furthest of mankind from hitting the right note, and most intrusive of them into company.
O you who shout with a throat that belongs to no class, and suits no string whether it be gentle or harsh;
You and your playing make a match, and you are as parasitical as a dog after soup.
If you occasionally receive an invitation, it can only be by mistake; and if you obtain anything, it can only be as alms.

Bishr b. *H*ārūn the Christian clerk of Baghdad recited to me the following lines of his own on Abū Rafā'ah Ibn Kāmil one of the deputy judges in the Sawād of Baghdad:

My verses have passed judgment upon the Qā*d*i, who assented thereto and was buffeted and humiliated.
Had he not assented, I should have pulled out his moustaches, if I could find any.
To pluck them would however have been impossible, since nature has rendered it an impossibility.

In Sha'bān of the year 359 (began June 9, 969) he recited

[1] A name for Meccah.
[2] Game in the neighbourhood was inviolable.

to me the following lines about two ministers, one of whom had been installed in the other's place :

He is gone who gave us little ; and he has come who will grudge the little.
I guess our next ruler will be a mendicant, if due progression is observed.
Say to the Fāṭimid : You have hitherto been somewhat slow in your journeyings and haltings.
Make haste ! Perhaps God will grant the ailing land a cure from you.

I was told by Abu Ja'far b. 'Ubaidallah b. Qannāsh, who was one of the entertainers of Saif al-daulah, that once when he was in the latter's company, there was also present Abū Nasr BINS, (**53**) a man of Nīsābur, who had lived in Baghdad during part of the reign of Muqtadir, and down to that of Rā*d*ī ; he was (he said) a follower of two of the same schools as ourselves, viz. of Abu *H*anīfah's in Law, and of that of the " People of Justice and Monotheism " (the Mu'tazils) in theology. He was a famous wit, inclined to raillery and frivolity, and a good talker, though of unblemished character, and held judgeships in many Syrian districts. One day in Saif al-daulah's presence he was asked why he had the sobriquet BINS. He replied that it was no sobriquet, but a word formed from his *kunyah* (ABU NASR), just as, he said, if we wanted to form a similar name from *Abu 'Ali* here (pointing to Ibn al-Bāziyār [1] we should say *Bi'l*, or from *Abu'l-Hasan* here (pointing to Saif al-daulah), we should say *Bi*hs.[2] Saif al-daulah laughed, and displayed no annoyance.

I was told by the same Abu Ja'far that he was in the Saloon of Abū Bakr Ibn Duraid when this Abu Nasr was there, studying with the former the poem which begins * * *
till he reached the words :

She removed a veil from the extremities of her features with fingers like the worms of the soft sandheaps ;

[1] A*h*mad b. Nasr.
[2] All these words appear to be meaningless.

When they perceive a lizard by the side of a rock, they encompass its edges with their *rabā'ith.*

At this point he interrupted the lesson, and asked Ibn Duraid what the word *rabā'ith* meant. Ibn Duraid said the word was used by the Bedouins for spears with broad heads. Abu Nasr (Bins) told him he was mistaken, and we were amazed at his venturing to contradict Ibn Duraid on a point of learning. We were anxious to see what would happen. Ibn Duraid, who was of a gentle disposition, simply asked Abu Nasr what the word did mean. He said it was the plural of *rabītha*ā (a sort of small fish) which is dished up. He resumed his lesson with energy, and we laughed at him.[1]

(**54**) I was told by the Qādī Abū Hāmid the following: I was standing, he said, before Mu'izz al-daulah, when he said to his vizier Abu Ja'far Saimarī in Persian: I want half a million dinars at once for a matter which does not admit of delay.—Saimarī replied: Make it more, Prince; for I should like the same amount myself.—Mu'izz al-daulah said: If you are my vizier, from whom but you should I demand it?—Saimarī said: But if the revenue shows no such surplus, whence am I to get it for you?—Mu'izz al-daulah flared up, and said: By Allah, I shall have you locked up in the privy till you produce it.—Saimarī retorted: And if you lock me up in that apartment, do you suppose that I shall there produce ingots of that value?—Mu'izz al-daulah laughed and let him alone.

I was told by Ahmad b. Mohammed Madā'inī that he once came on a Sūfī circle in the City Mosque of Baghdad, who were bandying with one another in accordance with the suggestions of their minds questions which resembled the suggestions of madness, and which he did not understand. It occurred to me, he said, to make fun of them, so I said to one of them: Distinguished

[1] The pronouns appear to refer to Ibn Duraid and Abu Nasr respectively. The word quoted is given in the Persian dictionaries as Syriac.

Sheikh, may I ask a question ?—He bade me state it.—I said : *Suppose you to be a Sheikh in your notion, at home in your personality, and then struck on the cranium by a dissection which severs your vertebrae by way of knowledge, whilst you are subject to will, can your qualities be in any way harmed, so long as you hang on to the cord of will, earnest friend ?* The members of the circle supposed this to be a real question, and began to interchange solutions. The sheikh however understood, and fearing that he would tell them to assault me, I slunk away.

Abū A*h*mad ʻAbdallāh b. ʻUmar *H*ārithī was with me once when there was a Sūfī present, who was humming some *rubāʻiyyāt.* Not liking this he said to him without reflexion : *Dear friend I will only interrupt your discourse with something better.*[1]

(**55**) I was told by al-Fa*d*l b. A*h*mad *H*ayyānī that the following had been narrated to him by Shafiʻi, friend of ʻAlī b. ʻĪsā. One day, he said, the bridle of my mount was seized by a porridge-dealer's boy, who held a dish of this food, which he was crying, in his hand ; this he lifted to my nose, saying : *A combination of almond and mutton !* He then proceeded to cry out his oath. I said : God bless you, I am on my way to the Vizier, and will not fail to inform him of this. Meantime please let me go.

I was told by Abu A*h*mad *H*ārithī the following : There was with us, he said, in Wāsit a wealthy but stupid man, named Abū Mohammed Ibn Abī Ayyūb, who used to entertain us with a female singer whom he loved. One of her performances was a song which commenced

The party are hastening their departure, and their camels have been loaded, so soon is it to come.

She sang this to a difficult but beautiful tune, and this Abu Mohammed was too stupid to follow the words. One day he asked her for it, saying : I adjure you, dear

[1] The point is not clear.

lady, sing me — altering the words so that their meaning became offensive. She replied: Good heavens, how can I sing anything of that sort?—I guessed what he meant, and told her what air he meant her to perform. After asking with an imprecation what the one had to do with the other, she performed it.

Among her airs was

Friends, let us take our morning draught of black.

One day he adjured her to sing it, substituting for "black" *sawād* a word meaning *fimus* (*simād*). She said: If you mean to, do it alone. One day (he added) she came upon us suddenly when we were having a pillow-fight; being ashamed, he asked us to leave off, which we did. We then sat down to our wine, and he asked her for an air to which he had a right. It was

Remove my armour, plague on you, for methinks the war will be more and more protracted.

(**56**) She presented him with a pillow.[1]

Abu'l-Faraj 'Abd al-Wā*h*id b. Nasr b. Mohammed Makhzūmī of Nisībīn, called BABBAGHA, recited to me a poem of his dedicated to Saif al-daulah, in which a battle of his with the Banu Kilāb was mentioned with his pardoning of them. It begins

When the guilty unsheathe thee, kindliness sheathes thee again;
If mercy restrain thee, resolution sends thee forth.

The whole of it would be worth quoting, only I have selected from his verse such passages as would be appropriate in occasional correspondence or contain adages or original sentiments, leaving the study of his best poetry, his finest versification, his melodious phrases, and most of his merits to students of his Diwan. In this ode there is an adage:

Whoever through his extreme iniquity is not improved by justice must be reformed by wrong.
When the Arabs fail to recompense the beneficence of their kings with gratitude, the barbarians dispute over their (the Arabs') territory.

[1] The text of this story is probably mutilated.

Restore them to their experience of thy clemency, in kindness whereto thy noble ancestors aforetime accustomed them.
If there is no room for excuse to them in thy mind for the wrong they have done, yet there is room there for mercy and gentleness.

The following was told me by the Qā*d*i Abū Bakr A*h*mad b. Sayyār : They illustrate, he said, a man's life thus. At ten years of age he moves within his family as this revolves on this (pointing to his thumb and forefinger, and making the combination ten).[1] At twenty he stands between two objects, his business and his family, as this stands between these two (making the combination twenty with his fingers). At thirty he is settled, as this is settled on this (making the combination thirty with his fingers). At forty he is erect, like this (making the combination forty). At fifty he is bent like this (making the combination fifty). At sixty (making the combination for that number) he is brought down in years and (**57**) strength, as this is brought down on this. At seventy he lies down, as this does on this. At eighty he requires something to lean on as this leans on this. At ninety his years and his entrails are straitened like this. At a hundred he departs from this world to the next, as the combination moves from the right hand to the left.

I was told the following by the Qā*d*ī Abū Bakr A*h*mad b. Sayyār : I was told, he said, by a sheikh who belonged to Tīz and Mukrān, whom I met in Oman, and whose trustworthiness and marine learning I found them eulogizing. The Qa*d*i told me that this sheikh had informed him on the authority of an Indian who had talked with him in India, how in a certain year an insurgent had risen against one of their kings and displayed administrative competence. This king, who was self-conceited and headstrong, despatched an army against the insurgent, who defeated it. The king then proceeded to march against the insurgent himself, though his ministers tried to dissuade him, telling

[1] The method of indicating numerals is explained at length in the article by G. J. Ruska in *der Islam*, x. 100 foll. See Appendix.

him that the insurgent forces would be weakened by armies being repeatedly sent against them. A King ought not to go against them himself, but should wear them out. For they have no resources with which they can resist army after army, if the sovereign sends them continuously. The king rejected their advice, took the field himself, was met and killed by the insurgent, who seized his palace and realm, and conducted affairs skilfully and royally. When after a time he had become firmly established and won high repute, he summoned an assembly of the wise men of India from all the departments and provinces of his empire. He wrote to his governors, ordering the inhabitants of each province to elect a hundred of their wise and prudent men and despatch them to him. When these had come to his gate, he ordered them to elect ten of their number ; these were admitted to his presence with ten of the courtiers. He then addressed them thus : A prudent man, he said, ought to look out for his own blemishes, with the view of removing them. Is there any blemish which you perceive in me or any defect which you find in my government ?—Only one, they replied, which, (**58**) if impunity be guaranteed, we will tell you.—When he had promised them impunity, they said : We find that everything about you is new (meaning that he was not of royal blood).—What, he asked, was the case with the king who preceded me ?—He was a king's son, they replied.—And with his father ?—They said the same. He repeated the question till he had enumerated ten ancestors or more, receiving in each case the same answer, till he got to the last, of whom they said that he was a conqueror.—I then, am that last, and if my days be prolonged and my government continue to be good, the sovereignty will remain with my children after me, and their descendants will have royal blood as good as that which my predecessor had.—Thereupon, he said, they prostrated themselves before the king, signifying their assent, this being their

practice when they approve anything or acknowledge themselves refuted; and the kingdom became thereby all the more securely in his possession.—I said to the Qā*d*ī: This is a doctrine which has been anticipated by the Arabs who have made two phrases serve in lieu of this lengthy foreign parable.—What are they? he asked. I said: The Arabs recount how two men were engaged in a boasting-match, and one said to the other: My pedigree begins with me, whereas yours ends with you.

I was told by 'Abd al-Ra*h*mān b. 'Abdallāh b. A*h*mad b. Bakr that he had heard the following from Abu Bakr b. Sa'īd b. Hārūn the Physician, whose father was a distinguished inhabitant of Sīrāf, of good means and a student of philosophy. My father, he said, was involved in a dispute with a man from Basrah, who said to him: Do you talk to me, who are a stranger from Sīrāf?—Sa'īd replied: I confer pedigree on my country, whilst you are a disgrace to yours.

I was told the following by Abu'l-Qāsim Sa'īd b. 'Abd al-Ra*h*mān, clerk of Ispahan: When *S*aimarī was vizier to Mu'izz al-daulah, I was present on an occasion when a man was brought before him who had incurred a fine, which the vizier proceeded to fix at a certain sum. He then said: Give me a surety and then you may go away and find the money. The man said: I have no surety as trustworthy as your kindness to me. *Ustādh.*—*S*aimarī was moved by this, reduced (**59**) his fine and gave him a gratuity.

I was told the following by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Yūsuf: I was informed, he said, by the Judge of Judges Abū Mohammed 'Ubaidallāh b. Ahmad (Ibn Ma'rūf) how once in the presence of Muhallabī they were discussing luck and ill-luck, when the latter said: Luck is nothing more than activity with humility, and ill-luck nothing more than laziness with self-conceit.

Abu'l-Faraj etc. known as Babbaghā (the Parrot), recited to me the following from an ode of his own:

I have brought love into the neighbourhood of a heart wherein my thoughts suffer and permit no enjoyment thereof.

(59) Ardent, with ardour suppressed by self-restraint; and the noblest love is the chastest.

I should be the most love-sick of all, were I to take to complaining; only I equip myself with patience against despair.

How comes it that my contemporaries are so stupid that they are all deceived or deluded about me?

He whose acts fail to ennoble his people by their excellence can be no originator.

I shun the watering-places finding in my thirst no abundance of water that will serve in lieu of a few draughts.

He also recited to me a poem of his own in honour of Saif al-daulah:

The days have provided in thee a rare experience; thou mightest be white hair on time's parting.

Everything that is distant, whereunto thy brave chargers hurry, is near.

They plunge into the regions as though they were winds blowing in both horizons.

They fill all that is between the two expanses with dust-clouds obscuring the sun's face.

Glory is to be attained only by the trained man, who in due measure is struck and strikes.

(60) Choose no friends before trial, for not every friend whom thou mayest choose is noble.

I was told by the Qā*d*ī Abū Bakr Mohammed b. 'Abd al-Ra*h*mān that he had been informed by a steward of Abu'l-Mundhir Nu'mān b. 'Abdallāh how it was the latter's custom at the close of the winter season to collect all the poplin, wool, blankets, stoves and other appliances for winter which he had been using and sell them by auction; he would then send to the Qā*d*ī's prison and find out what prisoners were there in consequence of their own confessions (not of evidence brought against them), and were without means. He would pay their debts out of the price obtained for these goods, or else would make a settlement permitting of their release, if the debt was heavy. He would then turn his attention to small dealers such as confectioners and pedlars, people whose business capital was from one to three dinars, and give them some sum such as ten dinars or a hundred dirhems as additional capital. He would also turn his

attention to those who were selling in the market such things as kettles, pots, torn shirts, etc. which would probably only be sold owing to extreme need, and to old women who were selling their spinning, give them many times the value of the articles, and allow them to retain them. Many more things of this sort would he do, and order me to carry out, expending the price of his goods on these objects. When winter came he would similarly collect his *dabīqī*, gold and silver network, matting, water-coolers, and other appliances for summer, and deal with them in the same way. When next summer or winter came, he would get in fresh supplies of everything he wanted.[1] When I grew tired of this procedure on his part, I said to him : Sir, you are crippling yourself without achieving any profitable result ; for you are buying these garments, instruments and furniture at abnormally high prices at the times when there is a demand for them, whereas you sell them at the season when there is no demand for them, and get in consequence no more than half price. Thereby you lose a vast sum. If you will permit, I will put all you want sold up to auction, and when they are about (**61**) to be knocked down, will buy them in for you at a higher price, reserve them for you for the summer or winter, and devote out of your estate an amount equal to that for which they were knocked down to these objects.—He said : I do not want this done. These are goods which God has permitted me to enjoy throughout my summer or winter, and He has brought me to the time wherein I can dispense with them. I have no assurance that I shall live to the time when I shall need them again. Possibly I may have offended God either for them or with them. I prefer to sell the articles themselves, and devote the actual price to these objects, by way of thanking God for having brought me to the time wherein I no longer need them, and as compensation for any offence which I may have committed in connexion with them. Then if God spare me for the time when I shall require them, they

[1] Jaḥiz in the *Taj*, p. 150, ascribes similar liberality to 'Abdallah b. Ṭahir.

will not be very costly and I shall have no difficulty in purchasing the like, renewing my stock and enjoying the new articles. There is a further advantage about my selling them cheap and buying them dear, which is that the poorer dealers from whom I buy and to whom I sell will get the profit from me, whereas this will not affect my fortune.

The Qā*d*ī added that this agent told him how when any rare dainty or sweet was served up before Nu'mān, he did not like to eat much of it, but would order it to be given away as it was to mendicants. Every day too he used to order what was taken away from his table with such of his slaves' rations as remained over in his kitchen to be given away, whence a great number of mendicants assembled at his gate every day. One day, he said, a Hāshimite friend was eating at Nu'mān's table, and some dainty dish was served up. Before they had finished Nu'mān ordered it to be given to the mendicants. A fatted kid was then served, and before they had enjoyed it, he ordered it to be removed and given to the mendicants. There was served up a dish of almond made up with pistachio-nuts, of which Nu'mān was fond, and for a glass of which according to the size he paid fifty dirhems, five dinars, more or less. They had only eaten a little of it when he said : (**62**) Hand it over to the mendicants. The Hāshimite held the glass fast, and said : My friend, imagine us to be the mendicants, and let us enjoy our food ; why do you hand on to mendicants everything for which you have a taste ? What has a mendicant to do with this ? They can do very well on beef and date-cake ; so please, do not let it be removed. Nu'mān replied : My friend, what you see is a custom of mine. A bad custom it is, he said ; we shall not endure it. If the mendicants must have it, then order a similar dish to be prepared for them ; let us enjoy this, and pay them its value in money. Nu'mān replied : I will counter-order and have a similar dish prepared for them ; but as for money—a mendicant would not have the heart or

spirit to prepare a dish of this sort, even if many times its value were paid him ; when he gets the coins, he spends them on other things, on supplying more immediate needs, nor would he have the skill either to prepare such a dish. Now I like to share my pleasures. Addressing his slave, he bade him have a dish similar to theirs prepared at once and distributed to the mendicants. It was done ; and after this occasion, when he was entertaining any one whom he respected, he ordered dishes similar to those which were to be served to be prepared and bestowed in charity, and only ordered them to be removed from his table when the guests had had sufficient.

I was told the following by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh: Abu'l-Qāsim Ibn al-*H*awārī, he said, used to be visited by a man of 'Adhrā, named Abū 'Ismah, the local preacher, who was frivolous and undignified, but a witty and agreeable talker, with a store of literary anecdotes. He was constantly at the table of the former, who bestowed on him various favours. Abu'l-Qāsim was very devoted to his mother, for whom he would reserve a share of the water, and of course of more precious things ; he would enjoy no food of which she did not eat. Of any dainty dish which appeared on his table he would invariably send her a portion. The first day Abū 'Ismah dined with him he was not aware of this practice. Several dainty dishes were served up, and (**63**) ordered by Abu'l-Qāsim to be taken off to his mother before Abū 'Ismah had taken as much as he wanted. Presently some milk-sauce was served with fatted fowl, turkey, nut-oil and mustard. Before the guests had had enough, Ibn al-*H*awārī ordered the dish to be sent off to his mother. Abu 'Ismah thereupon took a piece of bread, and rising up walked by the side of the tray. Whither away, Abu 'Ismah ? asked the host. To madam, he replied ; I am going to join her over this milk-sauce. Your table is a desert, whereas the abundance is with her. Ibn al-*H*awari laughingly ordered the dish to be brought back to him.

He added : Now this Abu 'Ismah was a friend of mine and talked freely with me. One day he told me that the people of 'Adhrā were scum and that he regarded it as a misfortune to be their preacher. When he mounted the pulpit, he made the sign of salutation with his hand, before the mueddhin uttered the call to prayer. The people supposed that he was blessing them, but the words he really uttered were very different.

I was informed by Abu A*h*mad al-Fa*d*l b. 'Abd al-Ra*h*mān b. Ja'far of Shiraz, secretary of state, who said he had heard the following from the son of Sulaimān the Ice-merchant. He said : My father told me that the source of his wealth was five *ratls* of ice. One year, he said, ice was scarce in Baghdad ; I had a supply of which I had sold all but five *ratls*. Shājī, slave-girl of 'Ubaidallah b. *T*ahir at that time prefect of Baghdad fell ill, and asked for ice. I was the only person who had any. When they applied to me, I told them I had only one *ratl*, which I declined to sell for less than 5000 dirhems. Of course I was acquainted with the situation. The steward, not venturing to pay that price, returned for instructions to 'Ubaidallah at his slave-girl's residence. She was crying for ice and urgently demanding it. 'Ubaidallah abusively bade him go back and buy the ice at any price without further consultation. He came and offering 5000 dirhems demanded the *ratl* ; but I refused to let him have it (**64**) for less than 10,000, and he, not venturing to return without it, gave me the sum I asked and took the *ratl*. The invalid improved somewhat and then demanded another *ratl*. The steward then brought another 10,000 dirhems and asked for another *ratl* if I had it. I sold him it, and when the invalid had consumed it, she showed signs of convalescence, sat up, and asked for more. They applied to me again. I assured them that I had only one *ratl* left, and that I would only sell it for a larger sum than the others. However he cajoled me into letting him have it for ten thousand.

Then the desire seized me to consume some myself, in order to be able to say that I had consumed ice worth ten thousand direms the *ratl*. And when I had consumed one, near dawn I received a visit from the steward, saying that the invalid was now nearly well, and that if she could consume one more *ratl*, she would be completely restored. If then I had any left, I might make my own terms. I replied that I had only one *ratl* left, for which I demanded thirty thousand dirhems. He offered me the sum ; but I felt shame before Allah at taking thirty thousand for one *ratl* of ice, and said I would take twenty thousand, but that after that, were he to bring me " an earthful of gold," he could get none from me, since all I had was now gone. He gave me the twenty thousand, and took the *ratl* ; and when Shājī had consumed it, she became herself again, and asked for solid food. 'Ubaidallāh gave away a large sum as a thankoffering, and summoning me the next day, told me that after Allah I was the person who had restored his life by giving life to his slave-girl, and bade me name my own terms. I replied that I was the humble servant of the governor. So I was appointed to look after the ice and drinks, and many of the affairs of his household, and so the dirhems which had come to me in this lump sum were the foundation of my fortune, which was increased by what I continued to earn from 'Ubaidallāh during my career with him.

In the year 360 (began Nov. 4, 970 A.D.) in the house of the Qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan Mohammed b. *S*āli*h* b. 'Ali al-Hāshimī b. (**65**) Umm Shaibān we were discussing the vastness of Baghdad and the number of its inhabitants in the days of Muqtadir, as well as its buildings, streets, lanes, the size of the place, and the multitudinous classes of the inhabitants. I happened to mention a book which I had seen by a man named Yazdajird b. Mahbindān al--Kisrawī (who lived in the time of Muqtadir) at the court of Abū Mohammed Muhallabi, of which some

sheets had been handed to me and to other courtiers to copy and send to the Prince Rukn al-daulah, he having asked for it, containing a description of Baghdad, and an enumeration of its public baths, which were ten thousand —a number which some writers actually name—and the number of the population contained in the place, and of the vessels and sailors, and the wheat, barley and other comestibles which it requires and how the money which came from the ice-merchants every day to the ferrymen was thirty or forty thousand dirhems. Some one else mentioned a book composed by A*h*mad b. *T*ayyib on the same subject. The qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan said to me: That is indeed an enormous amount, of whose truth I have no knowledge; still I have witnessed facts therein in connexion wherewith the statements of Yazdajird and A*h*mad b. *T*ayyib are not improbable, though we have not counted so as to be able to attest their accuracy. Only, a short time ago, in the year 345 (begun, April 15, 956 A.D.) when Mohammed b. A*h*mad known as Turrah, farmed Bādūrayā, he took great pains with its cultivation. Once we made a calculation of the number of *jarībs* of lettuce sown there in this year, and computed roughly how much lettuce was brought into Baghdad from Kalwādhā, Qu*t*rabull and other places in the neighbourhood. It came to two thousand *jarībs*. Now we found that on every *jarīb* six sorts were sown, and that of each sort so many roots were plucked—this I do not remember. On each *jarīb* then there were so many roots. The average price of lettuce at the time was twenty stalks for a dirhem. The average amount earned by a *jarīb*, produce and price being both considered, was (**66**) 350 dirhems, valued at twenty-five dinars. Two thousand *jarībs* then gave fifty thousand dinars. All of this was consumed in Baghdad. What then must be the size of a city wherein in one season of the year one sort of vegetable was consumed to the value of fifty thousand dinars! The qā*d*ī went on to say: I was informed by a man who sold chick-

pea soup (he named the man, but I forget the name) that he had made a calculation of the amount of chick-peas made into soup in his market each year, and it came to 140 *kurr* ; and that this was exhausted each year, and when the year came round a fresh supply was ground. Now chick-pea soup is not a dainty dish, and is only consumed by the weakly and dandified two or three months in the year in lack of fruit ; and many times the number of its consumers never touch it at all. He went on to say that he had been informed by some of the sheikhs of the metropolis that the population of Baghdad in the year 345 was according to exact computation one tenth of what it had been in the time of Muqtadir—reference being made to both buildings and people.

In the presence of the Qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan Mohammed b. Sāli*h* al-H*a*shimī there was a discussion on the periods of gestation and the theories of Shāfi'ī and Mālik about them. I repeated a story which had been told me to the effect that Mohammed b. 'Ajlān had been born after four years and that his teeth were in two portions.[1] The qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan then said to me : My father had a wife who was of the children of al-Ash'ath b. Qais, of Kufah. She conceived by him and was with child for eleven months by certain computation.[2] He informed us of this after accurate investigation of the sort necessary in such cases. At the end of eleven months she bore a daughter who lived many years, and bore children. He added that his father had told him on the authority of his grandfather that the latter had seen in Kufah four brothers all born at the same time, (**67**) who all lived and became of age, some of them leaving issue. The qā*dī* informed us that the traditionalist Ismā'īl b. Abī Khālid had three brothers all born at once, all of whom came to maturity.

I was informed by Abu'l-'Abbās Hibah b. Mohammed

[1] He means, it would seem, solid.

[2] A case decided in England, 1921, agrees with this.

b. al-Munajjim from his ancestors that Ma'mūn cashiered a governor named 'Amr b. Nahyawi son-in-law of Mūsā b. Abi'l-Faraj b. al-*Dahh*āk, a wealthy native of the Sawād. He then ordered Mohammed b. Yazdād to take him into his custody and torture him until he got his written undertaking to pay ten million dirhems, which he was then to exact from him. 'Amr was delivered over to Mohammed, who treated him with respect and kindness, ordering him to be served and made comfortable, and assigning him a fine apartment in his house, where he was provided with servants and furniture suitable to his rank. For three days he did not speak to his prisoner. Meanwhile Ma'mūn was asking about the affair, and being informed of his luxurious treatment was growing angry, though the answer to his questions was that the money was being demanded of the man. On the fourth day 'Amr sent for Mohammed. The former narrates as follows: He said: My friend, I am aware of the orders which the Caliph has given you about me, and I assure you that I have never seen this sum nor its half nor its third, nor does my property contain such an amount. Possibly the Caliph, desiring my blood, has made this an excuse. Now you have treated me with such kindness that I ought to spare no pains in justifying you before your master. I have therefore made out a note of all my property real and personal, and here it is.—He handed it to me, and it contained the sum of three million dirhems assets with various debts. He then swore with the sanctions of divorce, manumission and other terrible oaths that he had left himself in addition nothing but the clothes on his person; this, he said, is all I have left, and the utmost that I can do; if you think fit to take it, and ask the Caliph to accept it in satisfaction of claims, then, if he agrees, God will have delivered me by your hand and rescued me from death (**68**) thereat; but, if he refuse, that will mean that he will deliver me over to my enemy al-

Fa*d*l b. Marwān, which means my death ; and in that case I shall not pay a single dirhem, nor shall I be one who is moved by humiliation rather than by honour. No, I shall perish without one coin of my possession coming to the Caliph. My obligations to you however remain intact, for which if I live I will show gratitude, whereas if I die God will reward you.—He continued : So I took his note and went to Ma'mūn. He asked me what I had done in the matter of 'Amr b. Nahyawi. I replied that he had offered me two million dirhems, and that he possessed no more than that.—Ma'mūn stormed and said : I absolutely decline to take that or four million or eight million.—Al-Fa*d*l then said to me : So long as you petted him, honoured him, seated him on a throne, and ministered to him personally and with your slaves, why should not he decline to pay ?—I said : Then take him over yourself, if you wish.—The Caliph bade him do so. Taking him into his house, he afflicted him, demanding ten million dirhems, tortured him and beat him, but he declined to give anything. Al-Fa*d*l came down to five million, but this was also declined. He offered to be satisfied with three million, but this too was refused. He increased the torture, but then fearing that the man would die thereof, in which case al-Fa*d*l himself might be held responsible for the sum, as having caused his death, he adopted gentler methods, treated him with kindness, clothed him with a robe of honour, and after seeing to his comfort for some days, reminded him that Mohammed b. Yazdād had offered two million on his behalf, and would he please produce this sum, as that would satisfy him. 'Amr replied that he had never owned such a sum or made such an offer to Mohammed. Al-Fa*d*l then went to Ma'mūn and told the whole story—how he had tortured him, at first demanding the whole sum, then his repeated reductions, then his change of treatment and offer to be satisfied with two million dirhems, then of 'Amr's resolute denial that he possessed

any means, and assertion that he had never made such an offer. I was present. Ma'mūn's expedients were at an end, and he was near doing al-Fa*d*l a mischief. Then I said: Commander of the Faithful, men are not measureable quantities, and not every one is moved (**69**) by ill-treatment. Al-Fa*d*l thought me mistaken in my treatment of 'Amr, but he had recourse to the same, trying it when it was useless. Had you left me alone at the first, I should have extracted three millions without difficulty, for here, I said, is the note of 'Amr in his own writing, showing that sum. I then produced it and threw it before him. Had I known, I went on to say, that the Commander of the Faithful would accept three millions at that time, I would have offered the sum: I offered two, with the idea of adding a million, if two did not satisfy the Caliph. Now my plan is ruined, and I am sure that 'Amr will not give a single coin after the ill-treatment that he has undergone. If the Commander of the Faithful thinks fit to have his blood, that is his business; in no case is there any chance of extracting anything from him.—Ma'mūn he said, felt some shame at this, held his head down for a time in thought, presently raised it and said: Well, one of my scribes or Nabataean officials ought not to be more liberal, honest and prudent than I am myself; so I present you, Mohammed, with 'Amr and his debts, take him and do with him what you will. So I took him from the charge of al-Fa*d*l b. Marwān, and released him, sending him home with due honour.

This story resembles one which I found in the hand-writing of the qā*d*ī Abū Ja'far b. al-Buhlūl. He states that he was informed by Mohammed b. A*h*mad al-Jushamī as follows. Al-*H*ajjāj b. Yūsuf once bade Mohammed b. al-Muntashir take charge of Āzadmard b. al-Firind and pound his hand against his foot until he had extracted the money which he owed. I, however, said Mohammed, extracted three hundred thousand dirhems from him in one week by mild measures.

This did not satisfy *H*ajjāj, who took him from me and delivered him over to his torturer Ma'add, who pounded and lacerated his hand, and further pounded his leg. One day when I was in the street he brought him up against me, crossing my path on a mule. Āzadmard bade me approach, which I did. He said: You were entrusted with the same business as this and treated me kindly, so I paid a certain sum willingly; assuredly not a single dirhem shall be taken from me by force. There are thirty thousand belonging to me which are deposited with So-and-so; take them as the reward for what you have done.—I assured him that I would take (**70**) nothing from him when he was in that plight.—He asked me whether I knew what he had heard my coreligionists quote as a saying of their Prophet? I said I did not. He said: I have heard them recount how he said: *When God wishes people well, He sets over them the best of them and sends them rain in its season.* He then ordered the muleteer to move on, while I remained in my place until a messenger came from *H*ajjāj bidding me answer his summons. I obeyed, and found him furious, with a drawn sword in his lap. He bade me approach. I vowed I would not while that was in his lap. God caused him to laugh and sheathe his sword, and he said: What did that Magian say to you?—I replied: Since you bestowed your confidence upon me I have never violated it, nor have I ever spoken false to you since you made me a friend. I proceeded to recount the story. When I was about to name the man with whom the 30,000 were deposited, he refused to hear it, saying: Do not tell me. Fancy this unbeliever knowing the traditions of the blessed Prophet!

When Mu'izz al-daulah (Abu'l-*H*usain A*h*mad b. Buwaihi) built himself his Palace at the Shammāsiyyah Gate, with the stables which are continuous with one of its sides,[1] whose beauty is unrivalled, and laid out the

[1] The original is obscure and corrupt.

race-course on the Tigris stretching between the palace and the garden overlooking the river which is attached to the mansion of *S*ā'id b. Makhlad (which afterwards became the dwelling of Abu Ja'far Mohammed b. Ya*h*yā b. Shīrzād, and was turned into a garden by Abu Ja'far *S*aimarī, the whole being now included in Mu'izz al-daulah's palace), he began by building the wall which encompasses the palace and the race-course, and the vast embankment which stretches from the end of Raqqat al-Shammāsiyyah to part of the Race-course. The length of the embankment which he erected is 1500 yards, and the breadth over 70, all of stout tiles besides the groins which strike out on the inside to buttress it. Work at this went on continuously, with workmen distributed **(71)** over different portions, after he had designed building himself a city,[1] going first to Kalwādhā with the view of founding it there, then meditating erecting it opposite Kalwādhā, then going off to Qu*t*rabull and wanting to build it there, and ultimately deciding to build a palace at the Shammāsiyyah Gate. This was to be such a fortification that it would serve in lieu of a city, and be less expensive. The cost was estimated at many millions of dirhems, and exceeded the estimate many times. Mu'izz al-daulah demanded that his vizier Abu Mohammed Muhallabī should find ways and means to meet this, though even the normal revenue showed a deficit on balance. Muhallabī found this a serious burden. Further Mu'izz al-daulah compelled the vizier with his clerks to undertake the building. And while they were engaged in this business one of Mu'izz al-daulah's courtiers declared that they were all scamping the work in order to get it done quickly at small expense, and embezzle the surplus. He showed Mu'izz al-daulah a place where there was a course of bricks insecurely laid. On this he walked in the presence of Mu'izz al-daulah, who had ridden thither, and a brick fell out. Mu'izz al-daulah

[1] See Miskawaihi ii. 182.

flew into a rage; he was exceedingly irascible, though good-natured withal, and when he had given vent to his wrath and the ebullition was over, would repent of what he had done; only who could put up with his ferocity? Summoning Muhallabī he showed him what he had seen. Muhallabī endeavoured to make excuses; Mu'izz al-daulah in his wrath ordered him to be thrown on the ground and repeatedly scourged. He then commanded that he should be strangled. A rope was thrown round his neck, and some grooms on the top of the wall seized it with the view of raising him up and strangling him. The news reaching his Turkish officers and courtiers, they hastened to kiss the ground before Mu'izz al-daulah and solicit his forgiveness of Muhallabī. The latter was then let down and released, and went to his house nearly dead. He displayed little concern, for fear his enemies should triumph and try to oust him from his place, and declare him to be a broken man, if he showed any signs of this; further that his master might not hear of his harbouring resentment, and be afraid of what he might do. It was therefore his practice on the night after such a scene to drink wine and call for music, and assemble (72) guests, to show how little he cared for what he had endured. On this occasion as it was nearly evening when he returned to his house, he called for food and ate in company. Owing to the terrible pain he had little strength left, but he held out, conversed and called for wine.—They said to him: Vizier, a little rest and repose would be better for you than wine, for which this is no time. They expressed disapproval of his procedure, but he began to console them for what he had undergone, quoting a line of poetry:

> The Commander of the faithful and his deeds are like fate, what fate does bring no shame.

He proceeded to drink some cups and then rose. I was told this by some one who had heard it from an associate of Muhallabī who was present.

It was the practice of Mu'izz al-daulah when he grew very angry to order an execution, but he did not wish it to be carried out, and liked to be asked to pardon; this happened exceedingly often in the case of persons belonging to his company. The first case wherein this was recognised, and in consequence intercession was attempted after he had ordered an execution, was when he found fault with a certain man in Ahwāz, where the prince was staying at the time. This person was a coiner, named Ibn Kardam al-Ahwāzī who had rented the mint in the Sūq al-Ahwāz, and struck bad dinars. The prince, not knowing their quality, sent a number of them to Basrah for the purchase of horses. The Barīdīs were there at the time, and the coins were not accepted owing to their baseness. They were returned, and the horse-breakers who had been sent with them returned and informed the prince of the matter. The latter was incensed, sent for Ibn Kardam, addressed him, and became so infuriated that he commanded the man to be hanged on the bridge of Hinduwān in Ahwāz. The man was then taken off, and hanged until he was dead. The person ordered to do the execution then returned and presented himself before the prince. The latter asked what had happened to the man. He replied that they had hanged him until he was dead. The prince flew into a passion and reviled the executioner and those who were present, saying: Was there no one (**73**) among you to ask me to spare his life? He then began to weep, for indeed he had a horror of bloodshed. They said: We did not know and were afraid of disobeying you.—After this when he ordered an execution he would be asked and indeed repeatedly till he remitted the sentence.

I was informed by *Talhah* b. 'Ubaidallāh b. Qannāsh as follows: One day I was at a colloquy at the court of Saif al-daulah among others of his courtiers, when a man was introduced, and addressed by the prince, who then ordered him to be killed; the order was immediately

carried out. The prince then turned to us and said: What evil manners are these! How wretched is the etiquette of this court of mine! One would fancy you had none of you seen the world, nor read the chronicles of kings, nor lived in the world, nor learned the lessons of religion and virtue!—We supposed he had noticed on the part of one of us some act which merited this reproof, and said: All our etiquette is learned from our master, whom God preserve!—this was how he was customarily addressed—and we were unaware that we had done any thing to earn this rebuke. If he think fit to favour us with the explanation, let him do so.—He said: Could not you see that I had ordered the execution of a Moslem, whose execution was unnecessary, being suggested partly by passion, partly by base political considerations; it being my hope that there might be among you some circumspect person who would beg me to remit the sentence, which I should have done, whilst maintaining my authority with him and others? By refraining you have caused me to shed his blood uselessly.—We replied that we had not ventured to do this.—What, he asked, not even when a man's life was at stake? This is no excuse.—We promised not to repeat the offence, and kept on offering excuses until he ceased reproving.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Yūsuf al-Azraq after his father, who said as follows: I was clerk to Badr al-La*t*ifī in the days of Muwaffaq and Mu'ta*d*id, and used to enter the palace with him and visit him there; I saw Mohammed b. al-*H*asan b. Sahl called Shailamah roasted by him alive. (**74**) He proceeded: So I said to him: How did he do that, and what was the cause? He said: One of the sons of Wāthiq had taken up his quarters in the City of Mansūr, and became a pretender to the Caliphate with the aid of Shailamah, whom the other made his vizier, and who took oaths of allegiance to him from most of the people in the metropolis, Hāshimites, judges, captains, soldiers, the youth

of Baghdad, and fanatics. His power increased and his fame spread, until he bethought him of making a public appearance in the city, and establishing himself there, where, if he succeeded in capturing the Caliph Mu'ta*d*id, he might occupy the palace. Mu'ta*d*id got news of the whole affair except the name of the pretender ; he raided the house of Shailamah and arrested him ; in his house were found lists of the names of those who had sworn allegiance to the pretender, who fled when he heard of this. Mu'ta*d*id ordered these lists to be publicly burned, for fear the army should know of his acquaintance with their contents, and become disaffected, believing him to be in the like case with regard to them. So he began to question Shailamah about the affair, and he confessed everything save the name of the pretender. Mu'ta*d*id tried mild methods in the hope that Shailamah would confess this also ; but he refused and after long discussion he said : I will not reveal his name though you were to roast me alive. Mu'ta*d*id then ordered the attendants to bring some long heavy tent-poles, and to bind him securely to them, then to bring a quantity of coal, and spread it on the bricks in his presence ; the fire was then lighted and the attendants turned him bound as he was to the tent-poles round the blaze till he died roasted. Mu'ta*d*id, he proceeded, bade them demolish the wall surrounding the city of Man*s*ūr, and a small part was actually demolished ; thereupon the Hāshimites gathered and represented to him that the wall was their pride, their memorial and their antiquity ; he then stopped the demolition, but dismissed the custodians whose business it was to keep it in order, made access to it easy and let it fall into neglect and allowed the public to remove portions ; within a few years the people had demolished the greater part of it, by gradual encroachments where their houses abutted on it, so that (**75**) the vizier of Muqtadir imposed a rent on every space which had thus been appropriated for private dwellings. The

sum thus obtained was very considerable, but this arrangement was followed in a few years by the gradual ruin of the city, so that it got into its present condition.

Among stories of extraordinary endurance is the following :—when Bābak al-Khurramī and his colleague Māziyār were brought before Mu'tasim, the latter said to the former : Bābak, you have perpetrated what no-one before has perpetrated, now exhibit unparalleled endurance.—Bābak said : You shall see.—When they were brought into the presence of Mu'tasim, the Caliph ordered their hands and feet to be amputated before him. The executioner commenced with Bābak, whose right hand was amputated ; as the blood began to flow, Bābak began to smear therewith the whole of his face, until it was entirely disfigured thereby. Mu'tasim bade them ask Bābak why he did this. Being asked, he replied : Tell the Caliph thus : You have ordered my four limbs to be amputated, and are determined on my death ; you are doubtless not going to cauterize the stumps, but will allow the blood to flow until I am decapitated. I was afraid the blood might flow out to such an extent that my face would be left pale, in which case those present might conclude from this paleness that I was afraid of death, supposing this rather than the loss of blood to be its cause ; hence I smeared the blood all over my face that no such paleness might be seen. Mu'tasim said : Were it not that his crimes do not permit his being pardoned, he would deserve to be spared for this heroism.—He then ordered the executioner's work to continue. After the four limbs had been amputated he was beheaded, the severed members were then placed on the trunk, naphtha was then poured upon them, and the whole set on fire. The same was done to his colleague and not one of them uttered a cry or a groan.

It is narrated that 'Afiyah al-Baqillānī and Khālid al-*H*adhdhā, the chiefs of the 'Āsabiyyah [1] of their time,

[1] The word usually means " Patriotism," which is not very appropriate here.

made a wager that they would walk on a heated iron door. The door was heated and when they got on the top of it, one of them loosened his drawers, then struck the other with his hand and arrested him, saying in incorrect Arabic: Wait till (**76**) I adjust my dress—both these persons being from 'A*t*f [1]—and he declined to let him go till he had adjusted his garment, both being on the door, then he finished his walk and got off the door, having won his wager. And if there was not some trick about the door, or some law of nature, as happens with the bottom of a kettle, which when the flame has been playing upon it becomes like fire, yet a man can take it into his hand for a moment, because the vapour is rising, provided he lays it down before the vapour is reflected downwards—I myself saw Abu'l-Agharr b. Shihāb al-Taimī in Basrah do this;—then I do not know what the process was.

Several people have informed me that if an iron plate be put into the furnace and heated to a white heat, a man may take and lick it twice or three times with his tongue before the heat return to it without hurting his tongue; and I saw Abu'l-*H*asan 'Alī b. Mohammed b. A*h*mad Tanūkhī introduce into his mouth several times a taper weighing a *ratl*, which he bit and then opened his lips so that I could see the flame of the taper in his mouth, for a time; then he took it out unextinguished. I asked him the reason of this, and he replied that dexterity was required in order to introduce it so quickly that the lips were not burned; but when it was once within the mouth it did no harm, because the heat which ascends from the body overcomes its heat, whence it cannot hurt.

Among the tortures employed by Mu'ta*d*id was that with which he killed Ismā'īl b. Bulbul. I was told by my father on the authority of various persons about the court who were acquainted with the facts, that Mu'ta*d*id

[1] A place in Najd.

ordered a great urn to be brought and filled with live white lead which was then moistened; the head of Ismā'īl to the bottom of his neck with part of his chest was then hastily immersed therein and held there until the white lead dried and his spirit issued from his extremity until he died. He also informed me that Mu'ta*d*id (77) ordered another man to have all the outlets of his body, mouth, eyes, ears, nostrils etc. tightly stopped with cotton; he was then left to swell and inflate until his skull flew off and he died.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Y*ū*suf b. Ya'kūb Tanūkhī as follows: said my father: I was with the master whose secretary I was at Dār al-Lāi in the camp of Muwaffaq, who was fighting the captain of the Zanj. A Zanjī follower of the Traitor, named Qir*t*ās, hit Muwaffaq with an arrow on the pap, crying out "Take this from Qir*t*ās!", a phrase which became proverbial with archers and still is. Muwaffaq was carried away prostrate and almost dying; the arrow was then extracted, but the head having been attached with cotton remained in the wound, causing a gathering and a swelling with an accumulation of pus, bringing Muwaffaq near death. This encouraged the forces of the Traitor, who called out to us every day: Salt him! meaning that Muwaffaq must be dead and should be embalmed (?). The physicians were agreed that the swelling should be lanced, only Muwaffaq would not allow them to do this; so they told Mu'ta*d*id that if it were not lanced the pus would spread inwards and cause death. Mu'ta*d*id told them to employ some stratagem, promising to secure them from his vengeance. One of the physicians let his right thumb-nail grow to a great length, and concealing the blade of a lancet beneath it came to Muwaffaq and asked leave to feel the ulcer and see how it was. Muwaffaq said: Perhaps you mean to lance it.—He showed him his hand and said, How can I lance it when I have no instrument in my hand?—Muwaffaq then permitted

him to feel it, and he lanced it with his instrument from end to end speedily, when the arrow-head fell out, followed by a quantity of matter and pus. Muwaffaq took fright owing to the suddenness of the operation, and with a blow beat off the physician; but when he felt the relief coming from the discharge and was refreshed, he decorated the physician and rewarded him, undergoing treatment until he was cured. Abu'l-'Abbas[1] began to look out for Qir*t*ās and when he saw him in the battle-field flung himself upon him (78) hoping to take him prisoner; Qir*t*ās however made a fierce resistance, and used to say to him in his barbarous Arabic O Abu'l-'Abbas, if I fall into your hands, cut me up into bow-strings.—Mu'ta*d*id continued to make the most strenuous efforts to catch him, and finally took him prisoner, after he had suffered several wounds. He was brought to Muwaffaq, who ordered him to be decapitated. Mu'ta*d*id asked for the life of the man in order that he might do with him as he liked. Muwaffaq admitted the claim of Mu'ta*d*id, who took him and made bowstrings from his five fingers. When I asked my father to describe the process, he replied that he had the nails pulled out and the skin of the fingers stripped from the ends, right over the shoulders and across the spine again over the shoulders to the ends of the fingers of the other hand, the human skin being so tough that this process was possible. It was then by his order wound into bowstring, and with it Qir*t*ās was impaled.

The following is a curious device put in practice by a thief in our time. I was informed by Abu'l-Qasim 'Ubaidallah b. Mohammed the Shoemaker that he had seen a thief caught and charged with picking the locks of small tenements supposed to be occupied by unmarried persons. Entering the house he would dig a hole such as is called " the well " in the *nard* game, and throw some

[1] *i.e.* Mu'ta*d*id.

nuts into it as though some one had been playing with him, and leave by the side a handkerchief containing some two hundred nuts. He would then proceed to wrap up as many of the goods in the house as he could carry, and if he passed unobserved, he would depart with his burden. If, however the master of the house came on the scene, he would abandon the booty and endeavour to fight his way out. If the master of the house proved doughty, sprung upon him, held him, tried to arrest him, and called out Thieves !, and the neighbours assembled, he would address the master of the house as follows : You are really wanting in humour. Here have I been playing nuts with you for months, and, **(79)** though you beggared me and took away all I possessed, I made no complaint, nor did I shame you before your neighbours ; and now that I have won your goods, you begin to charge me with larceny, you mean and wretched creature ! Between us is the gambling-house, the place where we became acquainted. State in the presence of the people there or of the people here that I have cheated, and I will leave you your goods. The man might continue to assert that the other was a thief, but the neighbours supposed that he was unwilling to be branded as a gambler, and in consequence charged the other with theft ; whereas in reality he was a gambler and the other man was speaking the truth. They would endeavour to make peace between the two, presently the thief would walk away with his nuts, and the master of the house would be defamed.

He informed me that he knew of another whose plan was to enter the residences of families, especially those in which there were women whose husbands were out. If he succeeded in getting anything he would go away ; if he were perceived and the master of the house came, he would suggest that he was a friend of the wife, and some officer's retainer ; and ask the master to keep the matter quiet from his employer for the sake of both ; displaying

a uniform, and suggesting that if the master chose to dishonour his household, he could not bring him before the Sultan on a charge of adultery. However much the master might shout Thief !, he would repeat his story, and when the neighbours assembled, they would advise the master of the house to hush the matter up. When the master objected, they would attribute his conduct to marital affection and help the thief to escape from his hand. Sometimes they would compel the master to let the thief go. Likewise the more the wife denied and swore with tears that the man was a thief, the more inclined would they be to let him go ; so he would get off, and the master would afterwards divorce his wife, and part from his children's mother. This thief thus ruined more than one home and impoverished others, until he went into a house where there was an old woman aged more than ninety years ; he not knowing of this. Caught by the master of the house he tried to make his usual insinuation ; the master said to him : Scoundrel, there is no one in the house but my mother, who is ninety years old and for more than fifty of them she has **(80)** spent her nights in prayer and her days in fasting ; do you maintain that she is carrying on an amour with you or you with her ? So he hit him on the jaw and when the neighbours came together and the thief told them the same story they told him he lied, they knowing the old lady's piety and devoutness. Finally he confessed the facts and was taken off to the magistrate.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Yūsuf al-Azraq as follows. I had heard, he said, how *H*usain b. Mansūr al-*H*allāj would eat nothing for a month or so though he was under close inspection. I was amazed thereat, and since there was a friendship between me and Abu'l-Faraj Ibn Rau*h*ān the *S*ūfī, who was a pious and devout traditionalist, and whose sister was married to Qasrī, attendant of *H*allāj, I asked him about this ; he replied : I do not know how *H*allāj managed, but my

brother-in-law Qasrī, his attendant, practised abstinence from food for years and by degrees got to be able to fast for fifteen days, more or less. He used to manage this by a device which had escaped me, but which he divulged when he was imprisoned with the other followers of *H*allāj. If a man, he said, be strictly watched for some length of time, and no trickery be discovered, the scrutiny becomes less strict, and continues to slacken as fraud fails to appear, until it is quite neglected, and the person watched can do what he likes. These people have been watching me for fifteen days wherein they have seen me eat nothing, and that is the limit of my endurance of famine; if I continue to fast for one day more I shall perish. Do you take a *ratl* of raisins of Khorasan and another of almonds and pound them into the consistency of oil-dregs, then make them into thin leaf. When you come to me to-morrow place it between two leaves of a note-book, which you are to carry openly in your hand, so rolled up that its contents may not break nor yet be seen. (**81**) When you are alone with me and see that no-one is watching, then put it under my coat-tails and leave me; then I shall eat the cake secretly, and drink the water with which I rinse my mouth for the ceremonial washing, and this will suffice me for another fifteen days, when you will bring me a second supply in the same style. If these people watch me during the third fortnight, they will find that I eat nothing in reality until you pay your periodical visit with supplies, when I shall again escape their notice when I eat them, and this will keep me alive. The narrator added that he followed these instructions the whole time the man was in prison.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan b. al-Azraq: When *H*allāj came to Baghdad to preach, he led astray many of the people and of the leading men, and was most hopeful of winning over the Rāfi*d*is because their system was the avenue to his. He sent to Abū Sahl Ibn Naubakht, hoping to seduce him. This person was a member

of that sect, but timid, prudent, and intelligent. He said to *H*allāj's messenger: The miracles which your master performs may well be wrought by trickery. Now I am a victim of the tender passion, and enjoy more than anything the society of the fair sex. I am afflicted with baldness, and am forced to let the hair of my pate grow long and pull it down over my brow, fastening it with my turban. Further I have to dye my beard in order to conceal its greyness. If *H*allāj will give me a head of hair and render my beard black without the aid of a dye, I will believe in the system which he advocates, whatever it may be; if he wishes, I will give him the title viceroy or sovereign, or prophet or even Almighty. When *H*allāj heard his reply he despaired of him and let him alone.

He proceeded: Now *H*allāj was in the habit of inviting different persons to bestow on him the different titles enumerated by Abū Sahl, suiting their various weaknesses. I was informed by the Qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*usain b. 'Ayyāsh by some one who had been present when *H*āmid b. al-'Abbās (**82**) arrested *H*allāj that a number of letters were produced which had been found in his house, from persons whose style showed that they were his emissaries in various regions. *We have sown for thee* they said *in each soil what will grow there; some agree to call thee the* Bāb, i.e. the Sovereign, *others the Lord of the Age*, i.e. the sovereign awaited by the Imāmis, *others the Greatest Legislator*, i.e. the Prophet, *others He Himself*, i.e. God, who is exalted far above what the wicked say.—*H*allāj, he proceeds, was asked to explain this dark saying, and repudiated it, declaring that he had no knowledge of these letters, that they were forgeries, with whose contents he was unacquainted, and whose phrases were meaningless.

The same person gave me an account on the authority of one who was present at the court held by the

vizier *H*āmid b. al-'Abbas at which documents were produced wherein *H*allāj ordained that one who intended to go on pilgrimage might substitute for it the following performance; he might select an apartment in his dwelling, make therein a niche (which he described), wash, adopt pilgrim costume, say and do certain things, make certain prayers, read certain texts, go round the apartment so many times, repeat certain formulæ and perform certain acts all of which *H*allāj settled and enumerated on his own authority. When all this was accomplished he would have fulfilled his obligation to make a pilgrimage to God's sacred house. This is a well-known doctrine of the *H*allājites, and one of them, said to be one of their experts, admitted as much to me, only he asserted that the theory was produced by *H*allāj from a tradition in the possession of the Prophet's family, and declared that the performance described did not count with them as a substitute for the pilgrimage in all cases, but only when a man could not make the pilgrimage owing to poverty, illness or other obstacle. His account of the performance was substantially the same as that given above, though his phrases differed.

Abu'l-*H*usain proceeded: *H*allāj being asked about this supposed that it involved no crime, and admitted it, saying that it was a doctrine which he had repeated as he had heard it. This admission was taken hold of, and *H*āmid demanded the sentence of the two Qā*d*īs Abu Ja'far A*h*mad (**83**) b. Is*h*aq Buhlūl Tanūkhī, of Anbār, and Abū 'Umar Mohammed b. Yūsuf—these at the time being the two qā*d*īs of Baghdad. Abū 'Umar pronounced the doctrine atheism, which was punishable with death, for the atheist is not given the chance of repentance.[1] Abu Ja'far pronounced that it was not punishable with death, unless *H*allāj admitted that he himself believed the doctrine; men sometimes record heretical

[1] Unlike the Apostate.

doctrines without believing them. "If *H*allāj asserts that this is a doctrine which he has reported but does not himself believe, there is no case against him. If he admits that he believes it, then he should be summoned to repent, and if he repent there will also be no case against him. If he decline to repent, then indeed he will deserve death."—The case, he proceeded, was decided according to the sentence of Abū 'Umar, and the reports in circulation about him, and his notorious heresy, unbelief, and seduction of his fellows from their religion. Muqtadir's leave was solicited for his execution; he had however seduced Nasr Qushūrī by a pretence of piety and virtue, not by his ordinary system, so Nasr warned the Queen-mother of the danger which would ensue from his execution; "I fear," he told her "lest vengeance overtake your son (meaning Muqtadir) for this pious teacher." She begged Muqtadir to spare him, but he rejected her request, and ordered *H*āmid to give orders for the execution. That same day Muqtadir caught fever, and this increased the delusion of Nasr and the Queen-mother; Muqtadir himself felt uneasy and sent hasty orders to *H*āmid to delay the execution, which was put off for some days, until Muqtadir's fears of illness were over, when *H*āmid demanded leave for the execution. Muqtadir made light of the matter; but *H*āmid said: Commander of the Faithful, if this man remain alive, he will pervert the sacred law, and make your subjects apostates; this will lead to the fall of your dynasty. Let me have him executed, and if any trouble befall you, then order me to be put to death.—Permission was given, and the execution took place the same day, for fear of further vacillation on Muqtadir's part. When *H*allāj had been killed, his followers asserted that it was not *H*allāj who had perished but the horse of one of the state-secretaries, which happened to die on that day; *H*allāj, they said, will return to us after a time. This folly came to be an article of faith with some of them.

The greater number of the tricks performed by this *H*usain b. Mans*ū*r *H*allāj (**84**) which he gave out as miracles, and whereby he misled the weaklings, consisted in the production of comestibles out of their season by various devices. Those who did not see through them were deluded thereby, whereas wiser persons detected them. An interesting case is one told me by Abū Bakr Mohammed b. Is*h*āq b. Ibrāhīm the Witness of Ahwāz. I was told, he said, the following by a certain astrologer (whom he named and described as able and astute). I was told, he said, about *H*allāj and the wonderful things done by him which he declared to be miracles and evidences of a mission, and I thought I would go and see what these tricks were like. So I went in the character of a religious inquirer. After a conversation he said to me: Desire anything you like, and I will procure it for you.—Now we were in a mountainous district where there were no rivers. So I told him I desired some fresh fish immediately. He said that he would procure this, and bade me sit still. So I sat down, and he rose up saying: I am entering the house to pray God to send it to you.—So he entered an empty house, locked the door, and after a considerable time came back to me, having evidently waded in muddy water up to his knees, bringing a large fish that was struggling. What is this? I asked.—He replied: I prayed God Almighty and He bade me go to the marshes and fetch you this. So I went to the marshes and waded in the pools, whence comes this mud, till I caught the fish.—Now I knew that there was some imposture, and I said to him: Let me go inside that house, and if I detect no deceit, I will believe in you.—He bade me do as I pleased. So I entered the house and locked myself in, and could find no passage nor device; and I was inclined to regret my venture, thinking that if I were to discover any deceit, and informed him of it, I should very likely be murdered by him in the house, whereas if I found none, he would claim my promise to believe in

him. What then was I to do? So I looked about the room and tapped the (**85**) wainscoting, which was of teak, and came on a hollow portion; then I moved a plank which I suspected and which pulled out, being a nailed door; entering thereby I penetrated into a vast apartment containing a large garden wherein were various trees, fruits, flowers and aromatic herbs, some in season, others out of season, being preserved, covered and kept alive with various devices; there too were fine storerooms containing different sorts of foods no longer needed with other things ready to be made up at a moment's notice when required; and in the same dwelling there was a great pond, into which I waded, and which I found full of fish great and small; one of which—a large one—I caught. My foot became in the process as wet and muddy as I had seen his. Then I said to myself: If I come out now, and he sees this with me, he will murder me; so I must devise some plan for escaping.—When I had got back into the room, I came forward, crying out: I believe, I believe!—He said: What is the matter?—I answered: There is no trickery here, and there is nothing for me but to believe in you.—Come out then, he said; and when I came out, he was at a distance from the door, having been deceived by my speech; but when I had come out, I started running towards the door of the dwelling, when he, seeing the fish, and knowing that I had detected his imposture, started running after me. He overtook me, but I flung the fish at his breast and face, saying: You have given me the trouble of going all the way to the sea, whence I have brought you this.—While he was occupied with the wound inflicted by the fish on his breast and eye, I got out of the house, and then flung myself on my back; so frightened and alarmed was I. He called out to me to come back into the house. I said No! If I once enter, you will never let me come out again.—He said: Listen. I assure you, if I wished, I could kill you in your bed. And if I hear this story told, I will kill you, though

you were (**86**) at the uttermost part of the earth. But so long as this tale is kept concealed, you are sure of your life. Go now where you will.—He let me go, and went back into his house. I, knowing that he could carry out his threat by suborning one of his gang, who believed what he chose about him, to kill me, kept the story quiet until his execution.

*H*allāj composed various treatises connected with his system, wherein he employs the affected language of the *S*ūfīs and repeatedly talks of " the radiant light." But when he talked intelligibly, his language was elegant, and his utterance pleasing.

One of his followers, a clerk, informed me of a rescript issued by him to one of his agents ; he read it out to me and I recollect the following passage : *It is now time for thee to usher in the glorious illustrious Fātimid dynasty, that is encompassed by the inhabitants of heaven and earth, and bid thou the conquering party and the power of its weakness, go forth to Khorasan, that the truth may lift its veil, and justice bare its arm.*" The same person informed me from a friend of *H*allāj who told him the story : We were with him, he said, in one of the streets of Baghdad, when we heard some sweet but doleful music. One of us asked what it was. *H*allāj replied : It is the dirge of Satan over the world.

I was informed by Abu Mohammed *H*asan b. Mohammed Tūmanī of Basrah, one of the scholars of that city, a good talker and a trustworthy recorder of traditions, as follows. As some of us Basrans were passing along a street, one of us having with him a young son, we heard a lute played, which pleased the lad, who asked his father what it was. The father replied that it was the sound made by the *hib* on the roots of the palm. This word is the name of a large iron drill with which the roots of palm trees are pulled out, and without which this cannot be done.

This Tūmanī was a powerful orator, who used to speak on public affairs in Basrah and argue with the magistrate when emergencies occurred. When Abū Ja'far *S*aimarī came to Basrah and demanded certain dues that had been remitted, a demand about which there is a long story, Tūmanī disputed with him, showing that the demand need (**87**) not be obeyed. *S*aimarī did not accept his plea, and resorted to the argument from force, when Tūmanī admonished him, saying : *Ustadh*, our town is plentiful in saints, though thinly peopled ; no good has ever come to any one who has wronged them. They will refer the matter to God and will transfix thee with the darts of the mornings—meaning their prayers. *S*aimarī turned the matter into a coarse jest, as was his manner openly in public and in business assemblies.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Yūsuf al-Tanūkhī : I have been told, he said, by many of our friends how, when people in Ahwāz and its district were misled by *H*allāj and the comestibles and beverages which he produced out of their season, and the dirhems which he called *Dirhems of Power*, Abu 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī, being told about it, declared that these things must be stored in places whence they could be produced by trickery ; he advised the people therefore to make *H*allāj enter one of their houses rather than his own and request him to produce two chaplets of thorns, and to believe in him if he could do it. *H*allāj heard of this advice, and how some persons were bent on following it, and departed from Ahwāz. His adherents to this day believe that the divinity which was immanent in him is ready to manifest itself in a son of his, and that the spirit of the Prophet Mohammed has taken up its abode in a man there of the Hāshimite family and the Rabi'ah branch, called, after his son, Abū 'Umārah ; he is addressed by them as *Our lord*, which is a title with them of the highest rank.

I was informed by a person who had been invited by

one of the *H*allājites to a *séance* in Basrah at which this Abu 'Umārah discoursed on the system, who reported as follows. I entered the room, he said, it being supposed that I was an inquirer ; and the man talked in my presence. He squinted and kept turning his eye towards (**88**) the ceiling to get his ideas. As we went out, my friend asked whether I believed. I replied that I was more sceptical about their system than ever. This person, I said, has with you the rank of the Prophet ; why does he not cure himself of squinting ? Fool, answered my companion, do you suppose he squints ? He is turning his eyes about the kingdom of heaven !

This Abu 'Umārah was married to a woman of Ahwāz, called the daughter of Ibn Jānkhash ; she had a brother of bad character, who sang to the tambourine, though his father was a highly respected Witness, and a wealthy cultivator. The *H*allājites give this brother the rank of Mohammed b. Abi Bakr, the Uncle of the Believers !

I was told by 'Ubaidallāh b. Mohammed as follows : One day we were riding in Ahwāz, having with us a witty clerk from Sīrāf, named Mubārak b. A*h*mad. We passed by this person, and he rose up and saluted. The clerk asked me who he was. I told him the man's story at greater length than I have here, whereupon he turned the head of his mule to go back. Where are you going, Abu Sa'īd ? I asked. To catch him, he replied, and ask him what he whispered to 'Ā'ishah, Mother of the Faithful, on the Day of the Camel, when he stretched out his hand to her to take her out of her howdah.—Laughing at this reply I made him turn.

This young man, Ibn Jānkhash's son, inherited a large fortune, and shortly afterwards the Dailemites entered Ahwāz ; he paraded his wealth, entertained the Dailemites, and spent the greater part of it upon them. He studied their language and got to speak it like a native. He further found out the names of their villages and the

titles of their regions. When his resources ran low, he purchased a couple of mules and a couple of horses, and a set of javelins, with armour and a soldier's kit, and arranged his hair in the style of the Jīl and the Dailem, calling himself H*alwaz son of Ba'alī,* a Jilite name, whilst his father's real patronymic had been Abū 'Alī. He came as a deserter to Abu'l-Qāsim Barīdī, who was in Basrah warring against the Commander A*h*mad b. Buwaihi; (**89**) * * * his story is well known.

He told my informant personally as follows: I used, he said, to enter the Dailemite camp, and call to them, they not doubting that I was one of themselves, since I could give them the tokens of their districts. And if any person came up who suspected me, I would give him half my pay to keep quiet. I used to eat garlic and take nothing to stop the exhalation, enduring it in order not to depart from the practice of the Dailemites; then I would come and mount among the people who were standing until I got close to the head of Abu'l-Qāsim, who would be nearly killed by my poisonous breath; nevertheless I rose in his favour and he would have a chair placed for me as a member of his staff. When I sat down I would set about catching and killing the flies in his presence, after the style of a genuine Dailemite. This would make him cry out: Do release me, some one, from this truly hateful, stinking Dailemite, and take twice the pay. On these terms I remained with him for years, but at last my story was revealed, and I fled from him. This is one of the Tales of prodigal heirs to fortunes, produced here.

Another tale of the same style is the following, told me by some one. A man inherited a large fortune, and made great show, doing everything he desired. He then said, as I learn, that he wanted his friends to discover for him a trade which would bring him in nothing and enable him to dissipate the whole fortune. One of his friends

advised him to buy dates in Mausil and export them to Basrah. That, he said, would be a way to lose the money.—The man objected that this proceeding would bring in some return, though no more than a fifth of the capital, which would remain over. Another suggested a purchase of tailors' needles at three or four for a dirhem; he should keep on buying them until he had collected ten thousand with the requisite number of dirhems, and then melt the needles into an ingot and sell it for two dirhems. The man objected that even so the price, two dirhems, would be left. A third then said: I suppose you want a process whereby there shall be no return at all.—The man said Yes; and the other advised him to purchase such goods as he chose and sell them to the Arabs (**90**) for bills on Kurds, and to Kurds for bills on the Arabs. The man, we are told, adopted this process until all his property was lost.

Another, I am told, was in a hurry to get rid of his money, and when only five thousand dinars were left, said he wanted to have done with it speedily in order that he might see what he would do afterwards. Suggestions similar to the preceding were made to him, but he declined them. Then one of his friends advised him to buy cut glass with the whole sum, all but five hundred dinars, spread the glass, which should be of the finest, out before him and expend the remaining dinars in one day on the fees of singing women, fruit, scent, wine, ice, and food. When the wine was nearly drained he should set two mice free in the glass, and let a cat loose after them. The mice and the cat would fight amid the glass and break it all to pieces, and the remains would be plundered by the guests. The man approved the notion, and acted upon it. He sat and drank and when intoxicated called out Now! and his friend let loose the two mice and the cat, and the glass went crashing to the amusement of the owner, who dropped off to sleep. His friend and companions then rose, gathered together the

fragments, and made a broken bottle into a cup, and a broken cup into a pomade jar, and pasted up what was cracked ; these they sold amongst themselves, making up a goodly number of dirhems, which they divided between them ; they then went away, leaving their host, without troubling further about his concerns. When a year had passed the author of the scheme of the glass, the mice and the cat said : Suppose I were to go to that unfortunate and see what has become of him. So he went and found that the man had sold his furniture and spent the proceeds and dismantled his house and sold the materials to the ceilings so that nothing was left but the vestibule, where he was sleeping, on a cotton sheet, clad in cotton stripped off blankets, and bedding which had been sold, which was all that was left for him to put under him and keep off the cold. He looked like a quince ensconced between his two cotton sheets. I said to him : Miserable man, what is this ?—What you see, he replied.—I said : Have you any (**91**) sorrow ? He said he had. I asked what it was. He said : I long to see some one—a female singer whom he loved and on whom he had spent most of his wealth. His visitor proceeds : As the man wept, I pitied him, brought him garments from my house which he put on, and went with him to the singer's dwelling. She, supposing that his circumstances had improved, let us enter, and when she saw him treated him respectfully, beamed on him, and asked how he was doing. When he told her the truth, she at once bade him rise, and when he asked why, said she was afraid her mistress would come, and finding him destitute, be angry with her for letting him in. So go outside, she said, and I will go upstairs and talk to you from above.—He went out and sat down expecting her to talk to him from a window on the side of the house which faced the street. While he was sitting, she emptied over him the broth of a stewpan, making an object of him, and burst out laughing. The lover however began to weep and

said : O sir, have I come to this ? I call God and I call thee to witness that I repent.—I began to mock him, saying : What good is your repentance to you now ?—So I took him back to his house, stripped him of my clothes, left him folded in the cotton as before, took my clothes home and washed them, and gave the man up. I heard nothing of him for three years, and then one day at the *T*āq Gate seeing a slave clearing the way for a rider, raised my head and beheld my friend on a fine horse with a light silver-mounted saddle, fine clothes, splendid underwear and fragrant with scent—now he was of a family of clerks and formerly in the days of his wealth, he used to ride the noblest chargers, with the grandest harness, and his clothes and accoutrements were of the magnificent style which the fortune inherited by him from his parents permitted. When he saw me, he called out : Fellow !—I, knowing that his circumstances must have improved, kissed his thigh, and said : My lord, Abū so-and-so !—He said Yes !—What is this ? I asked. He said : God has been merciful, praise be to Him ! Home, home.—I followed him till he had got to his door, and it was the old house repaired, all made into one court with a (**92**) garden, covered over and stuccoed though not whitewashed, one single spacious sitting-room being left, whereas all the rest had been made part of the court. It made a good house, though not so lordly as of old. He brought me into a recess where he had in old times sought privacy, and which he had restored to its pristine magnificence, and which contained handsome furniture, though not of the former kind. His establishment now consisted of four slaves, each of whom discharged two functions, and one old functionary whom I remembered as his servant of old, who was now re-established as porter, and a paid servant who acted as *sā'is*. He took his seat, and the slaves came and served him with clean plate of no great value, fruits modest both in quantity and quality, and food that was clean

and sufficient, though not more. This we proceeded to eat, and then some excellent date-wine was set before me, and some date jelly, also of good quality, before him. A curtain was then drawn, and we heard some pleasant singing, while the fumes of fresh aloes, and of *nadd* rose together. I was curious to know how all this had come about, and when he was refreshed he said : Fellow, do you remember old times ?—I said I did.—I am now, he continued, comfortably off, and the knowledge and experience of the world which I have gained are preferable in my opinion to my former wealth. Do you notice my furniture ? It is not as grand as of old, but it is of the sort which counts as luxurious with the middle classes. The same is the case with my plate, clothes, carriage, food, dessert, wine,—and he went on with his enumeration, adding after each item " if it is not superfine like the old, still it is fair and adequate and sufficient." Finally he came to his establishment, compared its present with its former size, and added : This does instead. Now I am freed from that terrible stress. Do you remember the day the singing-girl—plague on her—treated me as she did, and how you treated me on the same day, and the things you said to me day by day, and on the day of the glass ?—I replied : That is all past, and praise be to God, who has replaced your loss, and delivered you from the trouble in which you were ! But whence comes your present fortune and the singing-girl who is now entertaining us ? He replied : She is one whom I purchased for (**93**) a thousand dinars, thereby saving the singing-women's fees. My affairs are now in excellent order.—I said : How do they come to be so ?—He replied that a servant of his father and a cousin of his in Egypt had died on one day, leaving thirty thousand dinars, which were sent to him and arrived at the same time, when he was between the cotton sheets, as I had seen him. So, he said, I thanked God, and made a resolution not to waste, but to economize, and live on my fortune

till I die, being careful in my expenditure. So I had this house rebuilt, and purchased all its present contents, furniture, plate, clothing, mounts, slaves male and female, for 5000 dinars ; five thousand more have been buried in the ground as a provision against emergencies. I have laid out ten thousand on agricultural land, producing annually enough to maintain the establishment which you have seen, with enough over each year to render it unnecessary for me to borrow before the time when the produce comes in. This is how my affairs proceed and I have been searching for you a whole year, hearing nothing about you, being anxious that you should see the restoration of my fortunes and their continued prosperity and maintenance, and after that, you infamous scoundrel, to have nothing more to do with you. Slaves, seize him by the foot ! And they *did* drag me by the foot right out of the house, not permitting me to finish my liquor with him that day. After that when I met him riding in the streets he would smile if he saw me, and he would have nothing to do either with me or any of his former associates.

I am rather sceptical about the story of the bills on the Arabs and the Kurds, and the affairs of the glass ; for even a madman in my opinion would scarcely go to that length.

Still there is a story that there was a certain man in Baghdad, the notorious Ibn al-Dukainī, whose father, a tradesman, died, leaving him half a million dinars, wherewith he amused himself in unsurpassed style ; he used to imitate Muqtadir ; whenever he heard of the Caliph doing anything in the way of pleasure, amusement or sport, he would do (**94**) something as near as possible of the same kind. The food of his establishment cost him daily two hundred dinars, many a time he distributed five thousand or ten thousand dirhems to the singing women, and to others robes of honour, worth two or three

thousand dirhems or a hundred dinars a piece, to the number of ten or fifteen on a single occasion, all taken out of the presses in his father's shop. If he felt the results of intoxication in the morning he would call for Dabīqī fabrics, and have bandages for bleeding torn off them by hand, asserting that nothing would stop his headache but the sound of this music. On one occasion when one of his mistresses was bled he spent three thousand dinars, and similar stories were told of his extravagance. When he had only some fifty thousand dinars left out of his fortune, he repented of all this, held his hand, and prepared to go on pilgrimage, spending ten thousand dinars thereon and on various pious works. Having performed the pilgrimage, he died on his way home to Baghdad, while still a young man, and the remains of his fortune were inherited by his heirs.

I heard a wit remark when the story was told of a man among us in Basrah, who, having inherited a fortune of a hundred thousand dinars, made away with it in a few years and became poor again, that he had said to the person: My friend, for this business some miles of gold dust should be the capital.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn al-Azraq as follows: I was visited by A*h*mad b. Mohammed Khorāsānī, who afterwards became the companion of Ibn Yāqūt, when, early in life, he had inherited fifty thousand dirhems. Entering the house of Zukūriyyah the singing-woman, he fell in love with a slave-girl called Zuhrah, belonging to her, who was famous in Baghdad for beauty, wit and singing, and who had attracted the young men of the metropolis. **(95)** Zukūriyyah said to him: I see that you are in love with my maid; how much have you got?—Fifty thousand dirhems was his reply.—The price of a concert without the right of selection, said she.—Only a few days passed and he had spent the whole, and I met him in a *jubbah* without a shirt either over or under,

walking barefoot ; afterwards God was good to him, and he was promoted by Ibn Yāqūt, became wealthy and wise.

The same person informed me that there was a foot-soldier in Baghdad named Ibn Wasna al-Khuzā'i, who loved a youth named *H*usain b. Gharīb the Greengrocer, who was comely, pleasing, witty and affable, and spent money on him, selling land which he possessed. Presently his resources became meagre, and he left the other alone, avoiding his society. Asked why he had discarded Ibn Gharīb and sworn that he would not speak to him, he replied ; Because the voice of *H*usain b. Gharīb makes the tiles fly.

I was told by Abu'l-*H*asan Yūsuf Ibn al-Azraq that there was in 'Askar a tolerably wealthy merchant named A*h*mad b. 'Umar b. *H*afs, whose son, during a journey of his father's to Ispahan, spent three thousand dinars of his money on singing-girls. The father was informed of this by letter, and on their meeting after his return demanded an account of the money which the son endeavoured to put off. The father then said : How long do you mean to put off the settlement ? I have been told how you spent the money, and if you have thereby gained wisdom and knowledge of the world, have been taught by experience and reformed, the result is not dearly bought with this amount of my fortune, for it is yours. If you have failed to acquire this, then for me to have such a son is a greater disaster than the loss of the money.

I heard the *S*ūfī dancer Durrah say : I hid with Abū Ghālib Ibn al-Ājurrī clerk to *S*āfī, one of the Sājiyyah, for a month ; I then grew tired, left him and fled, amusing myself for some days with my friends. I then returned to him, and when he reproved me, I told him that I had grown tired. He then asked me to remain with him so long as he was in hiding and if God should ever release him he would (**96**) pay for me singing-women's fees of a

hundred dinars for each day. I remained with him for about a month after this ; then he was out of danger, and showed himself, and his fortunes were restored. Meeting him one day I reminded him of his promise. He said Yes : sit down and make this day the first of the number. That day and the following night he gave a hundred dinars in fees to singing-women and expended about the same amount in other things ; and he did not let the singers depart until he had grown tired of them, and then others came instead. That then was how we passed the time ; every day and night he would pay a hundred dinars to singing-women, and spend twice the amount on food, drink, dessert and scent. At times it was necessary for him to interview his chief, and attend to business, when he would ride off and attend to it, coming back at night or in the evening, as best suited him. Meanwhile the singers were sitting and the kitchen going on, we enjoying the food and the concert during his absence from his house. This went on until he had paid me the number of the days wherein I had taken refuge with him, viz. more than thirty.

I saw the Abū Ghārib al-Ājurrī who has been mentioned, when he visited Baghdad in the time of Abu'l-Qāsim Barīdī, and he employed as mediator with my father his slave Mubaskshir, who had been in his service in the time of his prosperity ; I saw this slave of ours occasionally help him out of his own money with twenty or thirty dirhems or obtain for him from my father seventy or a hundred ; further he would eat, drink, and associate with him as a companion after having been his property. I saw him at times wearing a torn shirt and patched underwear, and sandals with which I had seen him walking in the streets, while his slave followed with sandal-like shoes which he put on when he entered our vestibule, and came before my father. For a time he attached himself to us, then finally my father asked

one of the officials to employ him at ten dinars a month, and employment at this rate was found for him.

Durrah the *S*ūfī said to me: If a man who had recently come into an inheritance dragged us to play with him, he possessing ten thousand dinars or two hundred thousand dirhems, we used to call him *the hurried;* and in answer to my query as to the meaning of this he stated that a son who died under a year old, (**97**) or over a year but unweaned, was called by the women by this name; we, he said, used to call such a person by the same appellation, meaning that his fortune if so employed would not reach beyond the age of the infant who dies after a month or a year and a few months and whom women thus designate. God keep us from adversity and from spoiling or driving away our fortunes by ingratitude!

Once on the occasion of trouble overtaking ıe I wrote to a leading man a letter, one paragraph of which is connected with the story which I have just narrated of the association of the clerk Abū Ghālib with our freedman Mubashshir, the trouble which I mean having been brought to mind by Abū Ghālib's original ownership of the man whose charity he afterwards accepted. That paragraph seemed to me so felicitous that I insert it here:

May God never compel you to demand the price of a benefit which you have bestowed, nor make your hand the lower where it has been the upper; may He save you from lost grandeur and a toilsome existence. May he preserve you alive so long as life becomes you best, and take you when death is best for you after a protracted span and soaring far aloft. May He finish your labours with blessing, and bring you in this world to your hopes, adjusting therein whatever is disturbed, and may He give you a fair issue in the next world. Verily He hears, and answers, is munificent and near.

I was told by Abu Mohammed Ya*h*ya b. Mohammed

b. Fahd that he had seen Abu'l-*H*asan 'Alī b. 'Amr of Mausil writing to Abu Taghlib son of Nāsir al-daulah, and in one passage of the letter he wrote *commendable things*. I observed to him, he said, that in that passage *beautiful things* would be more appropriate. *Commendable* was not a pleasing word. He replied: You are right, only once in Mausil I wrote a letter to Abu Taghlib which contained the phrase *beautiful things*, and this reached him when he was with his sister, who was very dear to him and so controlled his affairs that he would take no decision without her, or settle on any plan without consulting her. The letter was of a sort which he had to show her; and she so strongly disapproved of the phrase *beautiful*, because it was her name (*Jamīlah*) that I had to apologize. **(98)** Since that time I have never employed the word in any of my correspondence, and have instinctively avoided it.

This story is like what was said by 'Ulayyah daughter of al-Mahdī, who, when she in reading the Qur'an came to the passage—*if rain fell not thereon then dew* (ii. 267), unintentionally made a mistake and read *if rain fell not thereon, then what the Commander of the Faithful has forbidden to mention*, not saying *dew* because it was the name of a slave (T*all*) with whom she had fallen in love; and when her brother Rashīd heard of this, he scolded her vehemently, and made her swear by a formula which he selected that she would never mention Dew's name.

There is a story that a certain dainty lady read *Thou knowest what is in my spirit and I know not what is in Thy spirit* in lieu of *soul* (v. 116), because dainty ladies do not say that. One who heard this said to her: What, are you daintier than God? Say as He said.

Several people have informed me that Bachkam al-Mākānī, Emīr al-Umara in Baghdad, fell in love with a singing-girl there called Futuwah, maid of the Hashimite woman; he was too proud to purchase her, and also

would not condescend to tell his love. He used however to frequent her company, and give her all sorts of things. He had a lute made for her of Indian wood, which cost him a great sum ; and she would accompany her singing therewith. One day when intoxicated, he tore off the front of the lute and filled it with dirhems, of which it was found to contain more than twenty thousand.

With us in Basrah there was an auctioneer called Abu'l-'Abbās Baghdādī who had come into a large fortune in his youth, and squandered the whole of it. When he was impoverished, he took to this profession, and again acquired considerable means, of which however he saved nothing, as he always spent his gains in mischief. One of the Basran sheikhs told me that he had seen him in his youth on one of the nights of Rama*d*ān making for the house of Bid'ah Durūniyyah, the songstress of the place, famous for good character, skill, wit and beauty, of whom many entertaining stories are told. His sleeve was full of something, and I (said the sheikh) (**99**) asked him what it was. Khorāsān mixture, he replied, which I am taking as a Rama*d*ān gift to Bid'ah. I, said the sheikh, not doubting that it was what he said, asked him to let me taste. He thereupon threw into my sleeve a piece of it, which weighed my sleeve down, and we parted. When I got home, I wished to give it to my family to taste, and when I looked found that it was golden almonds with silver for sugar, pistachio and hazel-nuts of ambergris, and raisins of *nadd*. I locked it up, and when I looked at it the next day, I found that it was worth a great deal. So I went and offered to return it to him. He said to me : Dullard, what is this for you to return ? All that was in my sleeve yesterday was of the same sort ; and I distributed it all between Bid'ah and her maids.—I said : Had I known this, I should not have asked you for any.—He said : Then did you really suppose I was taking to Bid'ah almonds, sugar, raisins and pistachio nuts ?

The following was told me by A*h*mad b. 'Abdallah b. Bakr of Basrah. I was informed, he said, by 'Urwah al-Barīdī that having gone on pilgrimage in the year of the battle of Habīr,[1] he purchased an ape in Meccah, whereas his fellow-rider had a dog. The two animals made friends and used to have their meals together. We were attacked, he went on to say, by the Qarma*t*ian, who put some of our party to the sword, while the rest dispersed, and got separated from their mounts. I was one who escaped on foot, and got to Kufah with one dirhem in my possession. One day when sitting thinking to whom I could apply, and what I could do, I heard a confused crying and shouting, and going out to see what it was, I beheld the ape which had mounted on the dog's back and come all the way to Kufah ; and the people were laughing at this. The ape had been finding food for the dog as compensation for its services as mount, and so managing for itself throughout the journey. When I saw the ape and the dog, I called to them, and they came to me ; and when the people asked me about this, I explained that the animals were mine, and took possession of them. The story reaching the ears of the governor of Kufah, he sent to me requesting me to sell them to him, which I did for three hundred dirhems. This put my affairs straight for the time, and I could leave the place.

It is asserted on the authority of Wahb b. Munabbih that (**100**) in the time of the Israelites there was a wine-merchant who travelled with wine accompanied by an ape. He used to mix his wine with an equal amount of water and sell the whole at the price of neat wine. The ape by signs warned against this practice but got beaten for its pains. When he had sold all his wine meaning to return to his own country, he embarked on a vessel, having with him the ape and a bag containing

[1] 311 A.H. See Index to the *Eclipse etc.*

his clothes, and the purse which he had filled with the produce of his wine-sales. When they were out at sea, the ape extracted the purse, and carrying it mounted to the top of the mast, whence it proceeded to fling one dirhem into the boat and another into the sea alternately, until of the two halves whereinto it had divided the contents of the purse, that which went to the share of the wine was flung into the boat and collected by the owner, while that which went to the share of the water was flung into the sea and lost. When the process was complete the ape descended from the mast.

I heard the chief qā*d*ī Abu'l-Sā'ib narrate how a certain man had a debtor who fled from him, but was caught and seized in the desert, when the creditor produced a fetter which he had brought and set about fettering the debtor to himself therewith, placing one of the rings on the debtor's ankle, and the other on his own. They proceeded to a village near the place, but were overtaken by nightfall before they had reached it; the villagers had by this time locked the gate of their wall, and though the couple strove hard to make them open it, the villagers declined. They had to pass the night in a ruined mosque near the village gate. While they slept a lion came and seized the creditor, tore him and began dragging him, the debtor being perforce dragged with him, and continuing thus until the lion had finished eating the creditor, and being satisfied, went away leaving the debtor, who was wounded from the dragging and pulling which he had endured. The knee of the creditor still remained in the fetter, and the man carried it with his fetter and came into the village, where he informed them of the occurrence, whereupon they released him from the fetter and he went his way.

I was told by the qā*d*ī Abū Bakr A*h*mad b. Sayyār how a certain traveller was benighted (**101**) and had to pass the night in a deserted *khān* near a thicket where

there was stagnant water. It was a moonlit night, and the place a haunt of lions. The traveller being aware of this mounted the roof of the *khān*, and getting some bricks laid them in the doorway of the staircase; he then sat and watched. Presently a naked man came and sat on the brink of the pool. I asked him—said the traveller—what he was doing. Lion-hunting, he replied. I told him in God's name to consider what he was about. He told me I should see in a moment. After a very short interval a lion appeared, who when he saw the man, roared and made for him. When he came near, the man flung himself into the pool, and the lion dashed in after him. Both dived and presently the man emerged behind the lion, into whose body he presently forced a strong sharp hollow Persian reed a yard in length; he then proceeded to pump the water with one of his hands into this reed, and as it entered the animal's body the latter became weighted and his force decreased, till finally he drowned the beast, then dragged him in the water and finally landed him, when he removed the skin, the brow, the claws, the fat, and certain valuable parts with which he was acquainted, and then called out to me: Sheikh, that is the way to hunt lions. He then left me and disappeared.

I was told the following by my father's maternal uncle Abu'l-Qāsim 'Abdallāh b. Mohammed b. Mahrawaihi Ibn Abī 'Allan of Ahwaz, clerk: There was, he said, enmity between Abu Ja'far Ibn Qudaidah and myself, and when I had retired from official duties, he was agent for the estates of Muqtadir's mother, some of which were adjoining mine. He gave me great annoyance in matters of irrigation and labour, meaning to ruin my estate and humiliate me. For a time I put up with this, then one day he arrested one of my farm-labourers, and beat him **(102)** violently about the face. I then despatched one of the clerks on my estate named Abu'l-Qāsim 'Alī b. Mohammed b. Khirbān to remonstrate

with him, request him to desist, and to fetch the labourer. He received my messenger with harsh language, and the latter returning told me that the man meant mischief, and that I had better alter my line of conduct. When I asked him the news, he told me what had occurred. I began to ponder and could find no way of stopping his resources against me and carrying the war into the enemy's country except offering to farm the Queen-mother's estates myself, and thus getting control of his person, and demanding his accounts, and so bringing him into trouble. So I wrote to the Queen-mother's secretary, soliciting the right to farm her estates, offering an increase of thirty thousand dinars in three years on the sum offered by Ibn Qudaidah ; on condition that Ibn Qudaidah be handed over to me to be made to give an account, and to pay whatever the scrutiny showed to be due from him, which sum I would add to the increase already promised. I sent the letter with a special messenger, and when he had departed, I regretted having done so, thinking to myself that I did not know the real value of the estates, whence I ought not to have undertaken this. It would have been easier for me to endure the man's enmity. So I threw myself on my bed pondering, and while I was half asleep and half awake I seemed to see an aged man with white hair and beard, dressed like a judge, with a blue *ṭailasān*, a *kalansuwah*, and red boots, who came into my room and said : What is it that troubles you in this business ? The first year of your farming you shall gain ten thousand dinars in addition to the increase which you have promised ; the second year you shall lose ten thousand ; and you shall come off in the third year without either profit or loss, the reward of your trouble being your retaliation on your enemy.—I woke up in wonder and asked whether I had had a visitor, and was told there had been none. This gave me a little courage and on the twenty-second day there arrived a messenger from Baghdad with letters

to me wherein my demand was accorded, and among them a letter to a resident agent of theirs in *T*īb who was overseer of all their agents in the district of Ahwāz, wherein he was ordered to come thither and place Ibn Qudaidah in my charge, and assign the farming by contract to me. I sent (**103**) the agent a cheque for a thousand dinars as *douceur*, and further wrote soliciting his presence, enclosing the letters which I had received. A few days later when I was sitting with the governor of Ahwāz in his palace on the bank of the Dujail, we saw a vast host approaching from the direction of Ma'muniyyah. The governor took fright, supposing that some one had come to remove him from office. A messenger whom he sent to enquire returned with the intelligence that it was the Queen-mother's agent. The governor took me with him in his boat and crossed the river to meet the agent. When we met, he told the governor that he wanted Ibn Abī 'Allān. I told him that the name was mine. We had not known each other by sight before; he bade me rise from my place, and set me above all the company, to their astonishment and that of the governor, to whom he said: Now I want Ibn Qudaidah. A messenger was sent to summon him, and when he appeared, the agent had him fettered, and said to me: Abu'l-Qāsim, take him in charge!—The governor asked what all this pother was for; and the company began to jeer me. I told them that the man had forced me to take this course. So having him in my custody, I proceeded to my house, the Queen-mother's agent crossing the river with me, to whom I gave sufficient regards, gratuities and gifts to secure his benevolence, while he gave me a contract for the farming to commence on the morrow. The third day he departed with another *douceur* of a thousand dinars, and I reluctantly put Ibn Qudaidah to the torture in my house, and so extorted from him money for the Queen-mother, her secretary, and her agent, and further recovered what had been spent on the entertainment of

the agent and his gratuities. After some months I released him and let him return to his house, he being now heavily in debt, so that he had to sell part of his estate, was humiliated and depressed. I attended to my farming, and at the end of the year found that I had gained ten thousand dinars ; noticing that what the old man had told me in my dream had come true, I deposited the sum with my banker, and entered it neither in my incomings nor my outgoings. In the second year prices fell, and I lost the same sum, so that I employed my savings of the year before to cover the loss. (**104**) In the third year the turnover was exactly equal, without gain or loss. So, having made up the rest, I wrote asking to be allowed to give up the farming, knowing that the reverse which Ibn Qudaidah had sustained was sufficiently serious to prevent his either undertaking or being entrusted with this business. The Queen-mother's secretary however was unwilling to let me retire, and demanded that I should renew the lease at the increased rent, Ibn Qudaidah intriguing to make him unfairly insist on this ; finally he sent one of the highest officials in the service of the Queen-mother to fetch me. This person came in a boat with an alarming escort and I was afraid to go with him, lest I should find myself under arrest, and be subjected to torture, without having any means of escape. So I offered hospitality to the official, bestowed on him gifts and *douceurs* and five thousand dirhems in cash, which he thought a great deal ; when he was lodged in my house, I told him that as my household was large, I wished to arrange my affairs before leaving, whence I begged for a week's respite, during which I might be quiet in my house, to settle what was necessary, after which, I said, I will come with you. He gave me the permission which I desired, whereupon I bade my brothers, brothers-in-law, and clerks each of them invite him, his slaves, and his attendants for a day, keep them from knowledge of my movements,

and divert them with wine, chess and singing-girls. This they did, and I escaped at night in a patched garment, riding an ass, with two slaves and a guide and no money save bills for five thousand dinars. While I was travelling, the time of the Queen-mother's official was taken up with the invitations, so that he did not hear of my movements until I had reached Wāsi*t*. He was in a terrible state and proceeded to descend the river to Ubulla; I meanwhile had got near Baghdad, which I presently entered secretly, to throw myself on the mercy of Abu'l-Mundhir Nu'mān b. 'Abdallāh, who was my friend and companion in the days when he was governor of Ahwāz, when I was employed with him. He brought me (**105**) before Abu'l-*H*asan 'Alī b. 'Īsā, who was at that time vizier, telling him about me. The vizier told me that he had long been wishing to see me, owing to what he had heard of my secretarial skill; he tossed me certain documents to draft, which I drafted in his presence, my skill winning his praise and admiration; I stayed with him for some days, during which my movements were concealed from the Queen-mother's secretary; then I spoke to the vizier, and the Queen-mother was approached, but she declined to settle my business unless I appeared in her office. The vizier bade me do this, telling me that he was behind me, and I was not to be afraid. I presented myself and was put under arrest. I sent to my friends and Abu'l-Mundhir presented himself at the office of the Queen-mother, and mediated; arranging that the affair should be compromised by a payment of three thousand dinars (or thereabouts: the doubt is mine) which he guaranteed on my behalf. He then took me into his house and I payed him the sum out of the bills. 'Alī b. 'Īsā desired me to enter his office, but I informed him that I had abandoned the service and only undertaken the farming out of necessity, explaining the affair. He thereupon excused me and I returned to Ahwaz.

Years passed and the enmity between Ibn Qudaidah and myself continued, except that he had been routed. Presently the Sultan wrote to offer his lands in Ahwāz for sale, and people took to buying for half the price of a year's produce or less ; I bought as much as I required and made an extraordinary bargain. Abu 'Abdallāh Barīdī bought a large amount for himself under various people's names, by my advice and at my selection ; his secret remaining with me. At that time my own fortunes were on the wane. Ibn Qudaidah was one of the buyers. We took possession of the lands, and presently the Sultan wrote demanding an enormous increase. I think he said 100,000 dinars. Al-Barīdī asked me how this increase was to be provided. I told him that the people would not undertake to pay it on his behalf, as in the contract of purchase he had made a definite agreement with them. He gathered them and talked to them, but they declined, and he found it necessary to fall foul of them while leaving me. Presently he told me that I was the only person of whom he knew for this business, and that I must manage it for him. When he became urgent **(106)** I undertook to procure the money, provided he gave me a free hand, which he agreed to do. I thereupon sat down with a slave, Jūdhāb, and we distributed the money as a rate on the people of the place, omitting ourselves, on whom we imposed nothing, and reducing it in the case of those whom we favoured, and increasing it correspondingly in other cases. I decided to impose on Ibn Qudaidah twice the sum which should have fallen upon him, and we rated him accordingly. Then we discussed with the people the imposition of this rate, but they declined to pay it, asking on what principle it was imposed. When they had disputed and discussed the matter, I told them that whoever thought proper to pay the rate should do so ; if any one objected, he was to give me an account of the produce which he had obtained from the estates which he had bought, when I would return

to him as much of the price as remained when that was subtracted, and take the estate purchased, myself undertaking the increased rate. Now it would appear that each of them had purchased the land which had been in the hands of his company or neighbourhood, and been worked by himself and his ancestors for a hundred years, or else what he and they had been desiring and coveting for that period, or else what he and they had bought up cheap and improved. My suggestion then provoked consternation among the people of the place, and without exception they undertook to pay the rate which I had distributed among them without further questioning. Now I had imposed a vast sum on Ibn Qudaidah which he had no means of providing. One night when I was sitting in my house he came and presented himself before me. What is this, Abu Ja'far ? I asked, as I rose to salute him. He began to remonstrate and to fawn. I asked him what he wanted. You must reduce my rating, he replied, and assist me out of your own money, for I assure you I have not the means to pay. So I made a slight reduction in his rate, and lent him thirty thousand dirhems, for which I wrote an *I O U*, which I had attested by all the qualified witnesses of the place. Leaving this in my house I thought no more of the sum for years, but kept devising other annoyances, fines and vexations for him, under which he daily melted and waned. When I was aware that he had come to extremities, I demanded of him the debt. He hid himself in his house. I demanded the aid (**107**) of the qā*dī* Abu'l-Qāsim 'Alī b. Mohammed Tanūkhī, who wrote a demand for assistance on my behalf to the prefect of police. Ibn Qudaidah thereupon fled from his house, and the qā*dī* caused him to be summoned to appear by proclamation at his door. This having no effect, I requested Barīdī to force him out of hiding ; coming on him unawares he accomplished this, and made him appear with me before the qā*dī*. Evidence of the debt having been produced, I

asked the qā*d*ī to imprison him ; he (the qā*d*ī 'Alī b. Mohammed) stated that actual imprisonment was unnecessary, and that men of rank are not imprisoned in the same gaol with the lower classes ; but, he said, I give you permission to look after him yourself or through one of your friends as you please. So I looked after him in a mosque at the qā*d*ī's gate, and then going to Barīdī told him that my adversary was enjoying the protection of the qā*d*ī, and that I begged his for myself ; for, I said, it is quite possible that Ibn Qudaidah may suborn some of his labourers or some soldiers to remove him from my custody, and enable him to go to Baghdad, where he will evade paying the money due to me, and intrigue against me so as to endanger my position. Barīdī spoke to the qā*d*ī on this subject, and it was arranged that I should hire a dwelling near the qā*d*ī's prison, of which I should myself pay the rent ; there I installed Ibn Qudaidah, keeping watch on him through my friends, while he was also guarded by foot-soldiers whom I paid for the purpose. There he stayed more than a year, without paying his debt, and plotting against me in his spirit, while I was satisfied to let payment be delayed so long as he remained my prisoner. Presently he became seriously ill, and his mother, who was related to me, came and begged me with tears to release him, which I refused to do until I was informed that he was likely to die, when I yielded to his mother's supplications, and let her take him away, after I had made her go bail for him. He died three days after his release, and I purchased some of his lands with the money which he owed me.

I asked (**108**) Abu'l-Qāsim Ibn Abī 'Allān how he came to resign public service, and what was the cause of this. The cause, he said, was that Abū 'Alī Mohammed b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb Jubbā'ī used when he came to Ahwāz to lodge with me, I being clerk to the municipality of Ahwāz, and deputy to the finance-officer Abū A*h*mad Ibn *H*usain b. Yūsuf, so that everything passed through

my hands and was managed by me. Abu 'Alī used to come to Ahwāz once a year when the collection of the land-tax commenced, and have added to the land-tax on his estate at Jubbā that which was paid by certain persons who in the course of years had got into the habit of attaching themselves to him. When he came to the place he was treated by the inhabitants with honour and respect ; on most occasions he would stay only with me, and I would settle his business with the governor. The governor was not always a friend of mine, and at times was a person unaware of the position occupied by Abu 'Alī—else the amount at which his duty was fixed would be less—only he would invariably remit the half or the third of the tax due from him ; and when Abu 'Alī returned to Jubbā he would retain none of the gross amount due as tax from his estate for himself, but after deducting what he had to pay to the government, would distribute what remained among those who attached themselves to his adherents, stipulating that in return for this each of them should entertain for the whole year one of the poor students who attended his lectures ; the amount which each of them had to pay for these students came to a small sum, not one fifth of the tax which he by his eminence had caused to be remitted. Returning home he would deduct from the revenues of his estate a full tithe which he would distribute in alms among the poor of his village al-*H*auz where he maintained his disciples. This was his yearly practice. On the occasion of one of his visits after I had done what he wanted in the matter of the land-tax, and we were sitting in the evening talking, I said to him : Abu 'Alī, are you afraid of the consequences for me of my present employment ? How could I fail to be, Abu'l-Qāsim ? he replied ; for assuredly if you should die (**109**) while so employed, you will not smell the odour of paradise. Why ? I asked, and what guilt have I contracted ? I am only an accountant, and act as a copyist and employé of the

treasury. Or there comes to me some man with a grievance, whose land-tax has been unduly raised, and if I reduce it for him, and rectify the account, he cheerfully makes me a present ; or at times I may appropriate some of the Sultan's property, which only represents the share of the booty of the Moslems to which I have a right. He rejoined : Abu'l-Qāsim, God is not deceived. Tell me, do not you select the land-surveyors, and send them to do their surveying with instructions to be accurate ? And do not they proceed to add with their pens one or two in ten, and then bring you their falsifications, which you make the basis of your registers ? These registers you then hand over to the tax-gatherer, who is told that so much money must be produced at the office of the collector within so many days, else his hands will be nailed to his feet.—I agreed. He went on : Then the tax-gatherer proceeds, and takes with him cavalry and infantry and despatch-riders, and hasteners, and beats and cuffs and fetters, acting all the time on your instructions ; if you tell him to release a man or grant him a respite, he accepts your order, whereas if you give no such permission he insists until the man pays. I assented. —Then the money, he proceeded, is placed with the collector and the papers are issued to him from your office and bearing your mark.—I assented.—Then what part of the business, he asked, are you not undertaking ? For what part are not you responsible ? Beware of God, else you will perish. Give up your official post and look after your future. Then he went on exhorting me and preaching to me until I burst into tears. Then he said : You are not more highly favoured or more highly placed than Ja'far b. *H*arb, who filled important offices at court and whose privileges and rank approached those of the viziers ; who also held the orthodox creed and was famous as a man of learning, and the author of more than one book (**110**) which is still in men's hands. He while a public official was one day riding in a magnificent caval-

cade, in state and luxury of the highest sort, when he heard a man reading the verse *Is it not time for the believers that their hearts should humble themselves at the mention of God and the truth that has been revealed?* (Surah lvii. 15). He said *Yes, it is!* This he repeated with tears many times. He then alighted from his mount, stripped himself, and got into the Tigris, till he was covered with the water up to his neck. Before coming out he had divided all his property in making reparation for injuries which he had inflicted, in restoring, bequeathing and giving away in alms, and in doing what his system demanded or what he believed to be incumbent; a passer-by seeing him standing in the water, hearing his story, gave him a shirt and a pair of breeches, under cover of which he came out; he put them on, and then devoted himself to study and devotion until his death.—Then Abu 'Alī said to me: Go and do thou likewise, Abu'l-Qāsim; and if you cannot make up your mind to do the whole thing, at least repent.—His words impressed me, and making up my mind to repent, and abandon my employment, I for a time kept arranging my affairs with a view to this, so that when I got the opportunity of disengaging myself from the government I repented and resolved not to enter anew into public service.

Among the distinguished *H*amdānids was Abū Firās al-*H*ārith Ibn Abi'l-'Alā b. *H*amdān; he excelled in every virtue as I have been informed by various persons who knew him and in whose statements I place confidence; in goodness of character unsurpassed in his time (they said in Syria, at all times), with a faultless frame and goodness external and internal, perfect horsemanship and complete courage, and munificence; for indeed he had been reared in the school of Saif al-daulah, and in the bosom of his family, where he had imbibed his qualities, and acquired his interests; add to this a beautiful handwriting and an epistolary style and versification of extreme excellence. The collection of his poems is large, only before

his death he made a selection, as I have been informed by Abu'l-Faraj Babbaghā, omitting a great deal, "with my consent," this person added; "for he showed it to me, and he omitted whatever we thought poor, while he retained whatever we agreed **(111)** in admiring"; these poems he had transcribed into a copy which circulates. He died by assassination before he had reached his fortieth year. His age, he adds, was, I fancy, thirty-seven or thereabout at the time of his death; and this event, which happened in the year 357 (began Dec. 7, 967 A.D.) was due to the plot of Qarghūyah, slave of Abu'l-Haijā, who had been one of the generals of Saif al-daulah and his chamberlain. For after the death of this prince his armies split up, each detachment seizing a district; the largest force was with Qarghūyah in *H*alab, which he occupied; but a detachment joined Abu Firās, who with it made himself master of *H*ims. When Qarghūyah was established, he marched, having with him the prince Abu'l-Ma'ālī Sharīf son of Saif al-daulah who at that time was an infant, against his maternal uncle Abū Firās. Negotiations however took place between them, leading to a convention; and Abu Firās, not dreaming that Qarghūyah would venture to attack him, or that he had anything to fear from Abu'l-Ma'ālī, his sister's son, presented himself before the latter, and departed, without the prince meaning any mischief. Qarghūyah however was afraid that Abū Firās would gain influence over his nephew and urge the execution of him (Qarghūyah), whence he suborned some of the troops to assassinate him, they being fresh from a war that had not calmed down, and disturbances that had not yet settled. The prince Abu'l-Ma'ālī wished to punish the outrage, but was prevented by Qarghūyah, so that his death remained unavenged.

Saif al-daulah, he continues, had made Abū Firās governor of Manbij, *H*arrān and their territory; being raided by a Byzantine force he went out against it at

the head of seventy of his guards and followers, and dealt destruction among the raiders. The troops who would, he supposed, join him, failed to do so ; and being attacked by a more numerous body of Byzantines he was made prisoner, and remained in captivity several years, during which he kept writing to Saif al-daulah begging that he would exchange for him certain eminent Byzantines who were prisoners of Saif al-daulah, among them the Patricius known as George, and the emperor's nephew with others. Saif al-daulah, **(112)** grieved as he was and fond of him as he was, declined on the ground that he could not ransom his kinsman apart from the other Moslems ; the exchange of prisoners must be general. The days dragged on until the year 355 (began Dec. 28, 965 A.D.) shortly before Saif al-daulah's death, when the exchange was effected. With Abū Firās there was then released Mohammed son of Nā*s*ir al-daulah, who had also been a captive in their hands, and the qā*d*ī Abu'l-Haitham 'Abd al-Ra*h*mān, son of the qā*d*ī Abū *H*asīn 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Malik, who had been taken prisoner at *H*arrān some years before, and a large number of Moslems.

Abū Firās, he continues, composed poems of great beauty on the subject of his captivity ; one of these was due to the following circumstance. Saif al-daulah's communications with him had been delayed, and the former was informed that one of the captives said : *If the prince Saif al-daulah is in difficulty about providing the ransom-money, let us write about it to the ruler of Khorasan.* Saif al-daulah supposed this to have been the utterance of Abū Firās, he having guaranteed to the Byzantines the ransoming of the prisoners and the payment of the vast sum which they demanded, and asked whence the people of Khorasan knew of Abū Firās. The latter addressed to him an ode commencing as follows :

> Arabia's defender, and sword of the right,
> Oh why this unkindness and wherefore this spite ?
> And why do thy missives arriving oppress

With new tribulations one deep in distress ?
When thou art the mountain that towers on high
O'er me and thy race and o'er all Araby.
Of glories the source, and the suppliant's friend,
Creator of wealth and of fame without end.
Nor has this captivity tarnished my name :
Like gold which is tried in the fire without blame.
And how canst thou taunt me with being obscure
Who my elevation thyself didst procure ?
(**113**) Far better to change and my pardon implore,
Admitting that right is with me and my lore.
Impute not to me any want of renown,
For I am no stranger, but truly thy own.
Of thee I am part : if credit there be,
Or any discredit, then both are of thee.
And say that Khorasan my merits ignores :
Thy city Aleppo their memory stores.
And why has my fame to a distance not flown ?
Was father or grandfather wholly unknown ?
And are not the two of us sprung from one strain,
And one tie between us yet firmer maintain,
Affection which makes men of excellence kin,
With neighbouring homes and with joint discipline ?
Neglect not, I pray thee, thy duty to me :
Thy cousin or slave be the ransom for thee !
For wast thou a kinsman beloved before,
If ever I summoned thee, dwelling next door ?
But now we are distant in space, thou art cold,
And deeds that I like not from thee I behold !
And had I not known thee too well, I should say
"Out of sight out of mind," represented thy way.
And now through disaster I hold my belief
That still thou art loyal, unchanged by my grief.
I thank thee for days in thy company spent :
Thy anger against me I will not resent.

Babbagha adds : He composed besides many fine odes describing his captivity, the maladies that afflicted him during that time, lamentations over his bonds, pleading with Saif al-daulah, accounts of his being taken captive and what befell him therein ; in most of these he introduces new ideas wherein he has no predecessor. Later on we shall quote, please God, certain select passages.

(**114**) *Theorem. The ruin of the judicature in a state means the ruin of that state.*

I was told the following by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh :

The first element in the organization of the 'Abbasid government which was disintegrated in our time was the Judicature ; for it was degraded by Ibn al-Furāt, who filled the office of judge with persons who had no knowledge nor heredity, if they guaranteed certain payments. Ere a few years had passed the Vizierate became similarly degraded, being committed to unworthy holders ; so much so that in the thirties of the fourth century the Vizierate of Muttaqī was committed to the clerk Abu'l-'Abbās al-Ispāhānī, a man destitute of honour and of sense. Once I requested an audience of him, and the porter went to him and said " Ibn 'Ayyāsh is at the door." And I heard him say to him from behind the curtain "Let him enter." I said to myself : Good God, has the vizierate fallen so low as this ? Nay, he would ride with no-one in front of him save Ibn *H*adubnā mayor of the quarter. I once saw in Khuld Street a performing monkey round which a crowd had gathered. Its owner asked it : Would you like to be a haberdasher ?—It made a sign with its head meaning Yes.—The man went on : Would you like to be a perfumer ?—Again it made the sign for Yes.—The man proceeded to enumerate trade after trade, and each time the monkey made the affirmative sign. Finally he asked it : Would you like to be a vizier ? This time it made the sign for No ! and began to howl and run away from its master, while the people laughed.

He continues : The decline of the vizierate is followed by the lowering of the Caliphate, and hence it has reached the condition in which we see it. The collapse of the 'Abbasid power is due to the collapse of the judicature. Ibn al-Furāt first began to lower it by making a **(115)** judge of Abu Umayyah al-Akhwa*s*, of obscure origin in Basrah ; this person was a haberdasher in whose house Ibn al-Furāt took refuge, to go forth from it to the vizierate. While enjoying this refuge, he said to his host : If I should be made vizier, what would you like me to do

for you ?—The man said that he would like to have some government appointment. Ibn al-Furāt replied: Unfortunately you cannot be made into a minister nor a governor, nor a chief of police, nor a secretary of state, nor a general; so what post can I offer you ?—I leave it to you, said the host. Ibn al-Furāt then suggested a judgeship, and he assented. When the former quitted his refuge and became vizier, he bestowed on him various gifts and rewards, and besides made him qā*d*ī of Basrah, Wāsit, and the seven districts of Ahwāz. During the time of his concealment in this person's house Ibn al-Furāt used to make of him a butt, which the latter took in good part; but when he had appointed him qā*d*ī he began to treat him more respectfully. Abu Umayyah proceeded to his province, and was anxious to conceal his personal deficiencies and want of knowledge, and further to display some good quality; so he maintained strict integrity in matters of money, took no bribes, was strictly honourable, and confined his takings to his official income and the gifts bestowed on him by Ibn al-Furāt; and this course of conduct covered all his defects. He did not however escape satire; thus al-Qa*t*irānī of Basrah said with reference to him:—

Fortune plays her games upon us, spiteful always to the brave.
Save us, some one, from a time which day by day more plays the knave.
Never did I think that I should live and see one day combine
Akhwa*s* on the bench as judge and Ibn 'Abs installed divine.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*usain Mohammed b. 'Ubaid b. Mohammed the qā*d*ī, called IBN NA*S*RAWAIHI, as follows: At the time when Abu Umayyah al-——— held the office of judge in Basrah, I was a lad, and in the habit of visiting him with my maternal uncle. At that period the heat in Basrah was excessive, greater than it is now. Abu Umayyah used every evening to leave his residence in A*h*naf square (**116**) wearing breeches with a light cloak on his back, and sandals of Git [1] on his feet

[1] The text is corrupt. Perhaps the place called Git in Khwarizm is meant.

with a fan in his hand—he being qā*d*ī of Basrah, Ubullah, the districts of the Tigris, the districts of Wāsit and the territories belonging thereto. Around him there would walk such persons as might happen to be unoccupied at the time. Proceeding to the place where Abu Zakariyyā Ya*h*yā Sājī held his circle, he would sit and listen, or at times he would come first, and when Abu Ya*h*yā arrived they would sit and talk while their old friends and companions arrived; and their conversation and jesting would be free and easy to a noteworthy degree. Presently there would arrive Sa'īd al-*S*affār, who was Abu Umayyah's deputy in Basrah, arrayed in a magnificent bonnet with tunic, shoes, and hood, would greet him as qā*d*ī, and request his permission for certain matters; but Abū Umayyah would say in reply: Please go away. I do not want a crowd to collect round me, nor must you interfere with my amusement in conversing with my old friends. Go to your own seat.—Then Sa'īd would leave him and go and sit at a distance from him in the Mosque in his official seat, trying cases. This however did not derogate from his dignity in men's eyes, seeing that his conduct was exemplary and he exhibited a most unusual integrity in money-matters. Now the Office of the Pious Foundations of Basrah was in Baghdad, and when the beneficiaries wanted anything, they had to journey to Baghdad in order to obtain an order from the capital. As this occasioned serious inconvenience, Abū Umayyah had the office transferred to Basrah, thereby bringing blessings on his head. This institution remained, the office continuing in Basrah. He stood on his dignity however with Ibn Kundāj who was governor of Basrah, declining to call upon him save when he had received a call from him. He would also oppose the actions of Ibn Kundāj, and hear complaints against him; he even sent to the governor demanding reparation for the complainant, and if the governor remonstrated, he would write about him to Ibn al-Furāt, who would send back a

violent message bidding him obey the orders of Abū Umayyah, whom the governor would then be compelled **(117)** to conciliate, riding to him and appeasing him. When Ibn al-Furāt was arrested, Abū Umayyah was not informed, whereas a carrier-pigeon brought the news to Ibn Kundāj, who thereupon rode at the head of his troops to the qā*d*ī's house; the latter supposing that the governor was paying a visit of courtesy, came out and was immediately arrested, and made to walk in front of the governor the whole way to the latter's residence in the Banū Numair quarter, when he was thrown into the prison Under the Scaffold, where he remained for a time and then died. There is no account of any other qā*d*ī having been thrown into the prison Under the Scaffold, nor of any other qā*d*ī having died in prison. Presently Ibn al-Furāt was made vizier again, and so soon as he was installed in office he made inquiries concerning his friends and protégés, and was grieved when he learned what had happened to this person and of his death. He said: He is himself beyond me; but has he any child whom I can repay?—Being told that he had left a grown-up son, he wrote to him, and ordered that he should be honourably conveyed to the capital; this was done, but when the son appeared before the vizier, the latter found his mode of salutation imbecile, and asked him his name. He replied: Abū Ghashshān, his *kunyah* being really Abū Ghassān, but this he mispronounced owing to an impediment in his speech, while he was too stupid to know the difference between a name and a *kunyah*. Ibn al-Furāt regretted that he could not discharge his obligation either to Abū Umayyah in person or to his son, since he could not make such a man as the latter judge. So he made him a handsome present of money, and ordered a liberal annuity to be paid him, while sending him back to his native town. He continued to receive the annuity until the fall of Ibn al-Furāt.

I was informed by Abu Nasr Ahmad b. 'Umar of Bukhara the qādī: that he had heard from several trustworthy persons in Baghdad that the qādī Abu 'Umar after appointing a son [1] of Ahmad b. Hanbal to a judgeship received complaints concerning his conduct, hearing him charged with offences unworthy of his office. Wishing to cashier him, he met with remonstrances from people who asserted that the charges could not be true, and, unless he were sure of their truth, he ought not to cashier this person. His reply was that he was not sure of their truth, but was none the less bound to cashier him; and when asked why, he observed that the man's reputation permitted (**118**) things of this sort to be said about him, and he was in the category of those who when charged with such offences might be suspected of having committed them; and the qādī's office was too exalted for this. So he cashiered him.

I was informed by the qādī Abu'l-Husain Ibn 'Ayyāsh that he had been told by some one how when he was escorting the qādī Abū Hāzim, a man had come up to him, and blessed him for appointing some one judge in his city; for, he said, he is an honest man. Abū Hāzim shouted to him to be quiet: Do you talk, he said, of a qādī being *honest?* This epithet might be used of a police officer, but a qādī is above it.—We moved on, he continued, and the qādī seemed for a time bewildered. I asked him what was the matter. He replied: I never thought I should live to hear this; the times are wrong, and our profession spoiled. Unfortunately people have entered into it whose presence renders the praise of an honest qādī necessary; previously it was not needful for people to say such and such a qādī is honest; but that was before —— was appointed, mentioning a name which he preferred not to repeat. I asked this narrator who the man was, but he declined to say; when I became urgent, he indicated Abū 'Umar.

[1] *i.e.* descendant.

I was told the following by Abu'l-*H*usain: When Muqtadir invested Abu'l-*H*usain, son of the qā*d*ī Abū 'Umar with the independent judgeship of the City during his father's lifetime, a robe of honour was bestowed upon him, and there was a concourse of nobles, qā*d*īs, Witnesses, military and commercial men, etc., at the Caliph's gate. There they waited till Abu'l-*H*usain came out, clad in his robes, when they escorted him. And my uncle, who was connected with the family by marriage, and was one of the Witnesses at their courts, was with them. We two took our places at the end of the procession, for fear of the crowding. With us there was an old Witness (Abu'l-*H*usain mentioned his name, which I have forgotten). Wherever we passed we heard the people criticising Abu'l-*H*usain and expressing their astonishment that such an appointment should have been bestowed on so young a man, for all his worth, personal character, accomplishments, and hereditary distinction. The old Witness said to me: Abū Mohammed, you need not be surprised at this. I can assure you that when I rode with Abū (**119**) 'Umar on the day of his investiture at the court, the people by whom we passed expressed far greater amazement than they are expressing now, so much so that I was afraid they might assault us. Yet Abū 'Umar was a pattern of virtue, a unique example of intelligence and highmindedness. People are always ready to express amazement at anything unusual.

I was told the following by Abu'l-*H*usain 'Alī, son of the qā*d*ī Abū *T*ālib Mohammed, son of the qā*d*ī Abū Ja'far Ibn al-Buhlūl: The Queen-mother (mother of Muqtadir) asked my grandfather for the Trust-deed of an estate which she had purchased. This document was in the qā*d*ī's office, and she wanted to get hold of it and tear it up, so that the trust would be annulled. My grandfather, who was unaware of this, brought it to the palace, and told the Stewardess that he had brought the deed as ordered, and asked what next?—The reply was that they

wanted it in their possession. My grandfather then understood and said to the Stewardess Umm Mūsā: Please make the following statement to her majesty. Your proposal is quite impossible. I am the Moslem's custodian of the Bureau of Judicature, and either you must empower me to guard it properly, or else you had better dismiss me and take possession of it once for all, when you can treat it as you like, and remove from it or leave in it whatever you wish. Most certainly no document shall be stolen thence through me, not if I were to be threatened with the sword.—He then rose, taking the deed, and went off to his barge, not doubting that he would be dismissed. He mounted to the residence of Ibn al-Furāt, who was the vizier at the time, and told him the story. The vizier said: You had better have deferred your answer and informed me so that I might have put the matter right; whereas now you are certainly dismissed, and I can do nothing for you with the Queen-mother.—He continued: The Stewardess proceeded to give the message to the Queen-mother, who complained to Muqtadir. On parade day Muqtadir spoke to the qā*d*ī personally about the affair, and the latter explained the case and offered as before to resign his office. Muqtadir however said: A*h*mad, you are the right person to be appointed **(120)** qā*d*ī: stay in your post with God's blessing. Have no fear that this will injure your reputation with us.—We were told that when the Queen-mother made fresh representations to Muqtadir, he said to her: The laws are things not to be trifled with. Ibn al-Buhlul is true to us, a friend to our dynasty, a pious man whose prayers are answered. Had your demand been allowable, he would not have refused it.—The Queen-mother proceeded to ask her secretary Ibn 'Abd al-*H*amīd about the matter, and when he heard what my grandfather had said, he burst into tears—being a pious old clerk—and said: Now I know that the dynasty of the Queen-mother and the Commander of

the Faithful will endure for ever, seeing that it has a man like this saintly Sheikh, who maintained the law against the Queen-mother, and has no fear of censure where God is concerned. What would your purchase of a trust be worth ? Suppose you had got hold of the deed and torn it up, everyone knows about it, and God who is above all also knows.—The Queen-mother said : It would seem then that is unlawful ?—He said to her : It is. It is a device of the trustholders against the property of God ;—he further informed her that such a purchase would not be legitimated by the destruction of the deed of trust, which also is an unlawful act.—The Queen-mother got back her money and cancelled the purchase. She went so far as to thank my grandfather, to whose credit the matter now redounded at court. My grandfather, after telling this story added : If a man sets God's command before that of His creatures, He secures him against any mischief they can do.

I was told the following by my father. I heard, he said, the qā*d*ī Abu 'Umar narrate how a highly placed slave of Mu'ta*d*id had come before his father in a suit. The whole court rose up as he entered. The usher bade him face his opponent, but he declined, in the pride of his rank at court. My father cried out : What, when you are told to face your opponent, you refuse ? Calling to the assistant of the slave-dealer 'Amr b. Abī 'Amr, he bade him instruct his master to sell the slave and deliver the price to the Commander of the Faithful. Then he told the usher to take the slave by the hand, and set him level with the other litigant. The usher accordingly took him by force and made him sit with the other. **(121)** When the trial was ended, the slave went and told Mu'ta*d*id the story, complaining bitterly. Mu'ta*d*id however rebuked him, telling him that had the qā*d*ī sold him, he, the Caliph, would have recognized the sale as valid, and would never have taken him back into his possession. Your connexion with me, he said, does

not affect the majesty of the law, whereon government and religion repose.

I heard the following from the chief qā*d*ī Abu'l-Sā'ib 'Utbah b. 'Abdallāh. In our town, he said, meaning Hamadhān, there was a respected man, whose evidence the qā*d*ī wished to accept. Making inquiries about him both privately and publicly, he received good accounts. The qā*d*ī then sent to him, requesting him to attend at court, that his evidence might be accepted. Accordingly orders were given that his signature should be affixed to certain documents, that when he appeared he might testify to their contents. When the qā*d*ī sat, this man then appeared among the witnesses, and when his name was called, came forward with another witness. When they had taken their seats in order to attest, they were ordered by the qā*d*ī to stand up, which they did ; the qā*d*ī then proceeded to try the cases, and the court was dissolved, without his testimony being accepted. The man was in a dreadful state in consequence, and suborned some one to ask the qā*d*ī the reason for his procedure. I desired, he replied, to accept his testimony owing to his conduct and his piety, only I came to know that he was a hypocrite, whence it was not possible for me to do so.—Being asked how he came to know this *after* he had already summoned him for the purpose of accepting his testimony, the qā*d*ī replied that he had been counting the man's steps so far as he could see him on the way from his house to the court, as day by day he came thither ; the day he summoned him to give evidence he had counted his steps from the same place, and found that they were two or three more than usual. Hence, he said, I was aware that he had been playing a part with a view to obtaining this privilege, and so was a hypocrite, who could not be admitted as witness.

I was told the following by Abū Man*s*ūr 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Mohammed b. 'Uthmān known as IBN ABI 'AMR

the cup-bearer, chamberlain of the Caliph Mu*t*i. One day in my youth, he said, I visited the qā*d*ī Abu'l-Sā'ib, who either felt or displayed some difficulty about rising, owing to his age and constant infirmities ; so as he procrastinated, I pulled him up by the hands so that he stood quite erect, saying : Let me assist the Judge of Judges, God help him to be (**122**) courteously kind and to discharge his obligations towards his friends.—Now I had reasons for resenting his conduct towards me in certain matters, and had come to have it out with him, and was about to continue, when he, seeing the mischief in my looks, said : Be so good as to hear a couple of words, after which you may say what you like. When I assented, he went on : The comment attributed to Ibn 'Abbās on the text *forgive with kindly forgiveness* (Surah xv. 85) is " forgiveness without reproach"' If you are prepared to do this, do it.—This made me ashamed to take him to task.

I was present on an occasion when Abu 'Abdallāh Khumīnī, governor of Sūq al-Ahwāz, received a visit from Abu Bakr A*h*mad b. 'Abdallah known as Abu Bakr b. 'Abdallah Abī Sa'īd of Ispahan, the Clerk. The governor made a show of wishing to rise but finding it difficult, meaning his visitor to sit down before he himself rose. The latter perceiving his intention, stood at a distance, and called out : Come, get up, so that I may approach, otherwise I retire from where I am. The governor laughingly assured him that he had not meant what the other supposed, and rose up to his full height.

I was told the following by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh : Sulaimān b. al-*H*asan, he said, was appointed vizier for the first time shortly after I had become familiar with him, and I continued to visit him as familiarly as before, and found no change in his manner towards me. I was a young man at the time, and had not been admitted to the society of kings, but used to come to him when

other people were excluded, and be formally admitted when he was alone. It so happened that I passed the night before a function in the house of his father Abū Mohammed, and went the next morning to see him, intending to come away at once. When I came, there was the qā*d*ī Abū Umar and his son Abu'l-*H*usain, the qā*d*ī Ibn Abi'l-Shawārīb with his son, the qā*d*ī Ibn al-Buhlūl, various nobles, state-secretaries, generals, and courtiers, who, not being admitted, were seated in the corridor, whilst the chamberlain was standing (**123**) at the door of the staircase which led to a private chamber wherein the vizier was. When the chamberlain saw me, he ordered the curtain to be raised, and I was admitted to the presence of the vizier, who was fumigating himself, clad in black as he was about to ride to Muqtadir. There was no one with him. He talked with me for a long time, and when he had finished, he girt himself with sword and belt, and started out, I following behind; the visitors saluted him and kissed his hand, and started to follow him. I was about to mix with them, when some one tugged at my hood. Turning round, I found it was one of the head clerks (Abu'l-*H*usain gave the name which I have forgotten, adding that he was a friend of his own and of his father before him), who said to me: Abu'l-*H*usain, may your uncle (*i.e.* himself) be your ransom, do you happen to possess fifty thousand dinars?—Certainly not, I replied.—Then have you strength, he asked, to endure fifty thousand stripes and cuffs?—Certainly not, I again replied.—Then why, he asked, do you get admittance to the vizier, when so-and-so and so-and-so (enumerating the persons present) are excluded, anxious indeed to gain admittance, only being unable? Then, not content with this, you take up his time, and afterwards constitute yourself his sole attendant when he comes out on the day of a public ceremony. And all the time you have not got fifty thousand dinars ready against the day of his fall, when you will have to pay for having been his

favourite, nor the means of procuring the sum !—Uncle, I said, I did not know, being a law student, and of a commercial family, unaccustomed to the service of these people.—My son, he said, do not do it again, since this sort of thing will earn you a name, and bring consequences in its train.—After that, he said, I avoided paying calls on Sulaimān at the times of public audiences and especially on days of state ceremonies.

I was told by my father that when Abu Yūsuf[1] cultivated the society of Abū *H*anīfah in order to learn law, he was very poor, and his attendance on his teacher prevented him from earning his livelihood. So he used to return at the end of the day to short rations in an ill-appointed establishment. This went on a long time, his wife resorting to various expedients in order to maintain herself day by day. At last her patience was exhausted, and when one day he had gone to the lecture-room, spent the whole day there, and returned at night to ask (**124**) for his meal, she produced a covered dish ; when he removed the cover he found it to contain some note-books. To his question what this meant, she replied that it was what he was occupied with the whole day, so he had better eat it at night. Deeply affected, he went without food that night, and stayed away from the lecture next morning until he had secured some food for the household. Coming then to Abū *H*anīfah, and being asked why he was so late, he told the truth. Why, asked Abū *H*anīfah, did you not tell me, so that I might have helped you ? You need not be anxious ; if your life is preserved your legal earnings will enable you to feast on almond paste and shelled pistachios.—Abū Yūsuf stated that when he had entered the service of Rashīd, and enjoyed his favour, one day a dish of almond paste and pistachios was brought to the imperial table. When I tasted it, he said, tears came to my eyes, as I remembered Abū

[1] Famous *H*anefite jurist.

*H*anīfah.—When Rashīd asked me the reason of my emotion, I told him this story.

The occasion, said my father, of Abū Yūsuf entering the service of Rashīd was that one of the generals had forsworn himself, and wished to consult a jurist on the matter. Abū Yūsuf, being fetched, gave it as his opinion that he had not forsworn himself; and the general presented him with some dinars, took a house for him near his own, and attached him to himself. One day when the general visited Rashīd, he found him depressed, and, inquiring the reason, was told that the Caliph was troubled by a religious question, and requested him to fetch a jurist whom he might consult. The general brought Abū Yūsuf. Abū Yūsuf narrated as follows: Entering a corridor between the apartments, I saw a handsome lad with the marks of royalty upon him, imprisoned in one of the chambers which opened on the corridor. The lad made a sign to me with his finger, to implore my assistance, but I did not understand his meaning. I was then taken into the presence of Rashīd, and when I appeared before him, I saluted and stood. He asked me my name, to which I replied: Ya'qūb, God prosper the Commander of the Faithful.—He then said: What say you of a sovereign who witnesses a man committing a mortal sin? Must he inflict the penalty?—Not necessarily, I replied. When I said this, Rashīd prostrated himself, and it occurred to me that he must have seen one of his own sons committing that offence and that the person who had signalled to me for assistance was the adulterous son. Presently Rashīd raised his head and asked me my authority. **(125)** Because, I replied, the Prophet said: *Avert penalties by doubts*, and there is here a doubt which invalidates the penalty.—What doubt is there, he asked, when there is ocular evidence?—Ocular evidence, I replied, does not necessitate it any more than knowledge of the occurrence would necessitate it; and the law does not inflict penalties from

mere knowledge.—Why ? he asked.—Because, I replied, the penalty is a right of God, which the sovereign is commanded to maintain, so that it becomes as it were his own right ; and no person may exact his right by virtue of his own knowledge, nor himself enforce it. The Moslems are agreed that the penalty requires for its enforcement confession or evidence. They are not agreed that knowledge is sufficient to necessitate its enforcement.—Thereupon Rashīd prostrated himself a second time, and ordered that I should be given a vast sum as well as a monthly allowance among the jurists, and that I should be attached to the Palace. Before I had got outside I received a gift from the young man and another from his mother, and others from his followers, and thereby I got the foundation of a fortune. The Caliph's allowance was added to the allowance which I was receiving from the general, and, being attached to the Palace, I was asked for an opinion by one servant and for advice by another, and by giving opinions and advice I gained authority with them and won their respect, and presents kept reaching me from them, so that my position strengthened. Then the Caliph summoned me to a lengthy interview, to ask my opinion concerning an emergency, and treated me with cordiality ; and I proceeded to advance in his favour until he made me judge.

My father told me that he had heard how when Abū Yūsuf died, he left in his wardrobe two hundred pairs of silken pantaloons, of different sorts, each pair with its own Armenian band, worth a dinar. Further that he stood on such familiar terms with Rashīd that one day when summoned to the Palace he came in a travelling cloak, and when Rashīd saw him, he said to his courtiers, quoting a verse of Ibn Mayyādah

With a travelling-cloak wound round him he was brought by a mare with scant hair on her forehead, tossing a unique personality.

I was informed by the qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan 'Alī b. Abī *T*ālib, son of the qā*d*ī Abū Ja'far (**126**) b. al-Buhlūl, that

he had been told by his father a story told me also by *Ah*mad b. Yūsuf al-Azraq after Abū Ja'far b. al-Buhlūl the qā*d*ī, viz.: When matters had been settled by Nāsir li-dīn allah [1] after his finishing with the Zanj, he enquired into the needs of the cities and ordered that certain local men should be nominated judges in the various places. When he asked who among the people of Anbār was qualified for the judgeship, I was nominated; he had already made the acquaintance of my father, Is*h*āq b. al-Bahlūl, when the latter was summoned to an audience by Mutawakkil at Samarra. I had not up to that time held such a post. He ordered me to be summoned and appointed; Ismā'il b. Bulbul therefore gave instructions to that effect to the qā*d*ī Ismā'il b. Is*h*āq, who commanded me by letter to appear, and when I presented myself explained the situation, and sent me to Ismā'īl b. Bulbul. I told them both that I had independent means, and did not need to fill the office of qā*d*ī. So they left me alone, and I returned to my residence in Baghdad to arrange my affairs before going home. I was then visited by Ja'far b. Ibrāhīm *H*usainī, of Anbār, who asked me why I had been summoned. When I told him, he said: Look out for yourself. What has passed between you and them is a secret. When you return home, your enemies will say that you were summoned in order to be appointed qā*d*ī, only when you had been interviewed you were found unfit, and so rejected.—I asked him what I could do after having made my statement. He told me to go back to Ismā'il and report to him our conversation. Early on the morrow I went to Ismā'īl and when he saw me, he said: Yours is a different face from yesterday's. —I told him he was right.—Out with it, he said. So I repeated to him my conversation with Ja'far b. Ibrāhīm. He told me it was the sound advice of a true friend, and that the case was as he had stated; then he bade me go with him to the vizier. He brought me thither, and when

[1] Better known as Muwaffaq, brother of Mu'tamid.

Ismā'īl saw us, he asked with a smile how it was that Abū Ja'far (myself) had come back? Ismā'īl the qā*d*ī thereupon narrated to him the story, and he said: May God reward (**127**) your friend for his service to you, for his advice is thoroughly sound. Make out his deed of investiture. So a deed was made out in the name of Nā*s*ir, appointing me judge in Anbār, Hīt, 'Ānāt, Ra*h*bah, Qirqīsia and the adjoining territories, and I returned to my town.

I may add that this Abū Ja'far continued to be promoted until he was made judge in the city of Abu Ja'far Man*s*ūr, when Abū 'Umar was cashiered in connexion with the affair of Ibn al-Mu'tazz. He displayed excellence of character which won him fame, and was regarded by Muqtadir and his viziers as a saint and devotee.

As an illustration of this there is a story told me by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Yūsuf b. Ya'qūb b. Is*h*āq b. al-Buhlūl, who was told it by Abu 'Alī A*h*mad b. Ja'far b. Ibrāhīm *H*usainī. When Wāthiq, freedman of Mu'ta*d*id died, the latter ordered prayer to be said over him by Abu'l-*H*asan 'Alī b. 'Īsā. There was a congregation of the imperial grandees, generals, secretaries, nobles, judges, etc., among them the two judges Abū Ja'far and Abū 'Umar. I, said A*h*mad b. Ja'far, was present. When the body was laid in the grave, 'Alī b. 'Īsā was told to come forward, and was about to do so when his eye lighted on Abū Ja'far. He at once pulled Abū Ja'far forward in front of him, himself retiring. When prayer was over, I searched for Abu 'Umar to see how he felt; and I found him black in the face with vexation at Abū Ja'far being preferred to him. Coming then to Abū Ja'far, I proceeded to congratulate him on the occurrence, telling him also about Abū 'Umar. Though he bade me keep the matter secret, he was pleased that *I* knew and had witnessed the affair, owing to our being fellow-townsmen. This was done by 'Alī b. 'Īsā notwithstanding

that his relations with Abū Ja'far were strained; only the former did not keep men from their deserts even when he was himself on unfriendly terms with them.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan 'Alī b. Mohammed b. A*h*mad b. Is*h*āq b. al-Buhlūl the qā*d*ī as follows: *H*usain b. Qāsim b. 'Ubaidallāh had fallen into debt for a large amount, tens of (**128**) thousands of dinars, and being summoned by his creditors before the qā*d*ī, took fright and went into hiding. Coming to my grandfather the qā*d*ī, he asked his advice, stating that if he were to sell his possessions, he could meet the debt, remaining penniless; and though he was willing to starve and give all his revenues to his creditors, that would not satisfy them. What then was he to do? Would the qā*d*ī find some expedient?—Now *H*usain's residence was on the Eastern side, where the jurisdiction was Abū 'Umar's. My grandfather's reply was as follows: The Malekite law orders that when a man's incompetence in money matters is evident, his estate shall be administered by trustees; if then Abū 'Umar is interested in you, he will treat your indebtedness, which has been unnecessarily incurred, your having wasted your property and been extravagant, as evidence of your incompetence in money matters. And if he go so far as to hear on the subject the evidence of persons who are aware that this is true about you, and your incompetence is thus established in his mind, he will restrict your liberty, and prevent you from dealing with your property, putting it in the hands of trustees appointed by himself, who will stand between you and it. If then the creditors make good their claim to what you owe them, he will order the trustees to hand over the revenues to them in payment of the debt, while the capital will remain yours. *H*usain accordingly threw himself on the mercy of Abū 'Umar, who acted as described; he came out from his hiding, had a brighter outlook, and made the arrangement with his creditors which has been

explained. When this *H*usain became vizier, Mu'nis turned against him, and intrigued for his dismissal. He said to Muqtadir : Commander of the Faithful, this person was no fit depository for his own property, and had to be deprived of the right to manage it by the judges owing to his incompetence and extravagance ; how can it be commendable that he should be entrusted with the property of the whole world, and that he should administer the whole world, when he was incompetent to administer his own household and outgoings ? This proved one of the most serious reasons for his dismissal.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*usain Mohammed b. 'Ubaid known as Ibn Nasrawaihi that Tamīmī, a former qā*d*ī of ours in Basrah, during his period of office admitted 36,000 witnesses. When I expressed my astonishment, and asked the reason, he replied : The qā*d*īs who followed the system (**129**) of Abu *H*anīfah and those of other jurists held that all men were trustworthy if they complied with the conditions which you know ; hence people in general used to give testimony before Tamīmī, and, after hearing their evidence, he would make inquiries about them ; and when they were recommended, he would accept their testimony. People used to call on each other to give evidence, neighbours and dwellers in the same street ; we knew of no order of people specially qualified to give evidence until Ismā'īl held office. Out of the number of witnesses accepted by Tamīmī, 36,000, there were 20,000 who only gave evidence before him once.

I was told by Abu'l-Qasim al-Juhanī that Asad b. Jahwar was eccentric and forgetful. One day, he said, I was with him in the residence of a vizier ; he was sitting talking with us, there being amongst us a judge. The day being hot we took off our turbans, and the judge also laid aside his hood. Presently the vizier wanted Asad, who rose up hurriedly and seizing the judge's hood, put it on, to go to the vizier. The qā*d*ī shouted to him and

so did the rest of us, but he did not hear and so went before the vizier thus attired, to the vizier's amusement.

I was told by Abū Mohammed Ya*h*yā b. Mohammed b. Sulaiman after Abū Ja'far Ibn *H*amdūn after Abū Mohammed 'Abdallāh b. *H*amdūn as follows: I had (said the last of these) made a sworn covenant with God never to keep any money won at play; and that whenever any money came into my hands from this source, I should expend it on tapers to be burned or wine to be drunk, or the fee of a singing-woman. Now one day I sat and played backgammon with Mu'ta*d*id and won from him seventy thousand dirhems. Before ordering the amount to be paid me he rose to perform the afternoon prayer, which he preceded with a lengthy inclination, which occupied his mind; I merely performed the ordinary ceremony, and sat thinking and regretting the vow that I had made, saying to myself: What an amount of wax and wine I shall have to buy with this seventy thousand and what a number of singing women I shall have to fee! Why did I vow so hastily? Had I not sworn, (**130**) I could now be buying an estate with the sum.—Now the vow was to divorce my wives, manumit my slaves, and bestow all my goods personal and real in charity, if I saved any such money. While I was rapt in thought Mu'ta*d*id, unknown to me, was watching me, and when he had finished his inclination, he exclaimed: Praise God! and then said to me: Abū 'Abdallāh, about what are you thinking?—Good thoughts, your majesty, I replied. He adjured me by his life to tell him the truth, which I proceeded to do. He then asked me whether I really supposed he meant to give me seventy thousand dirhems over a game. Do you, I asked, mean to cheat?—Yes, he replied, I do; you had better get up and think no more about the matter.—He then started performing the prescribed prayer. Vexed as I had been over the first matter, I was still more vexed about the second, regretting

the loss of the money, and asking myself why I had told him, which I now blamed myself for having done. When he had finished his prayer, and resumed his seat, he said to me : Abū 'Abdallāh, I adjure you by my life to tell me the truth about your second meditations.—I had no choice but to tell him. Then he said : As for the gambling debt, that you have lost, since I repudiate it ; only I am going to give you seventy thousand other dirhems out of my own pocket, which I can pay without guilt and you accept without qualms of conscience, and being thus released from your vow you can take them and buy an estate with them lawfully. I kissed his hand, and he ordered the money to be brought, and presented to me. I took it and bought myself an estate therewith.

I was told by Abū Mohammed after Abū Ja'far after Abū Mohammed Ibn *H*amdūn as follows. I had incurred (said the last) a heavy debt, five thousand dinars in amount, which I had no means of paying ; the judges however would not assist the creditors against me owing to my intimacy with Mu'ta*d*id. Mu'ta*d*id however sat frequently to hear complaints, and when one was brought against me by my creditors, he ordered me to appear, and asked me about it ; I acknowledged that I owed it to them. He thought of handing me over to their custody on account of it, but reflecting that he would lose my society, and that people would talk about him as having meanly refused to pay one of his associates' debts, he decided to make himself responsible for the sum, told the creditors so, and gave immediate orders for the payment, which they received, and thus the affair ended. When (**131**) we were alone, the Caliph, using a coarse expression, said to me : Why were you in such a hurry to acknowledge the debt ? Could you not have repudiated it, in which case neither would I have been mulcted nor would you have been imprisoned ?—My conscience, I replied, would not allow me to look my creditors in the face and deny that I had received the money which they had given me.—Some

time elapsed, and once again I was in difficulties, borrowed some thousands of dinars, though not so many as before, and being summoned to pay, procrastinated, my income being insufficient for my expenses ; for the style in which I lived was too costly for my means, whence I had no means of paying the debt. Again then when the Caliph sat to hear appeals, the creditors appealed against me, I was summoned, questioned and acknowledged, and the Caliph paid the money for me. After doing this he said to the qā*d*ī in attendance : Take this person and advertise in the town that he is incompetent to deal with property, possesses none, owns nothing that could be sold in payment of his debts, and that whoever deals with him henceforth has no claim for goods delivered. When I looked aghast at this, he said : You are not going to make your creditors every day a mode of attacking my property. —Nor was there any help for this, until I went to the residence of the qā*d*ī and sat with him on the bench, when he was ostensibly proclaiming this among the people, but really uttering it to me without advertising it further.

I was informed by Abū Mohammed after Abū A*h*mad al-Fa*d*l b. 'Abd al-Ra*h*mān of Shīrāz, state-secretary, as follows : I was told, he said, by a trustworthy person that Ibrāhīm b. al-Mudabbir narrated how he was for a long time in love with 'Arīb, and spent large sums upon her. When, he said, I was hit by fortune, abandoned office and stayed at home, she too had aged, repented of her singing, and become paralysed. One day when I was sitting, my porter came and announced that 'Arīb's boat was at the door, and that she was in it and solicited an interview. I was surprised, but my heart warmed towards her, and rising went down to the river-bank, where I found her sitting in her boat. Madam, I said, how comes this ?—I longed for you, she replied, and wished to renew old times, and drink with you **(132)** to-day.—I bade her come up, but she told me she must wait

for her litter to come; and then I saw an elegant boat approach containing a litter, wherein she was placed, which her servants then brought up. We conversed for a time, then food was brought which we ate, then wine. I drank, and when I filled her cup, she drank and ordered her slave-girls to sing. Of these there were with her a number of highly accomplished performers, who sang with sweetness and in excellent style, which I greatly enjoyed. Some days before I had composed some verses, for indeed I was always devoted to the repetition and recitation of poetry; they were

> If thy night be sleep unbroken,
> Wakeful eyelids close not I.
> In the dark my sides seem rent by
> Scissors' edges as I lie.
> In God's care I place her for whom
> Openly I may not sigh.

Madam, I said to her, I have composed some verses which I wish you to set to music.—What, she exclaimed, Abū Is*h*āq, when I have repented!—Find, I said, some expedient for that.—Then she told me to recite the lines to two of her singing girls, pointing to Bid'ah and Tu*h*fah, whom I accordingly got to learn them by heart. She then thought for a little, striking her fan on the ground and humming to herself, and then told these girls to arrange a certain string in a particular style, to strike with a particular finger and to do various things until she had got the tune right, when she bade them sing the verses in a particular key, and put so and so in such and such a place. Then they proceeded to sing the lines as though they had heard them many times before. Ere the notes had issued from their lips (**133**) I thought to myself: Here is 'Arīb visiting me and setting my verses to music, and acting as a professional singer; is she to go away without a present? Never, not though I were to die of want, hunger, and poverty!—So I went to my slave-girls, and explained the situation, asking them to help me with anything which they had handy. One gave me

an anklet, another a bracelet, another a bead necklace, and another an ornament of some kind, until I had got together a collection in value of about a thousand dinars. I then called for a basket of gold filigree, weighing a hundred *mithqāls*, in which I placed the ornaments, and then bringing it to her told her it contained a few presents which I wished to bestow on the two maidens, and hoped she would order them to accept them. She declined, but not resolutely, saying: Abu Ishāq (*what follows is unintelligible*). I told her it must be, and thereupon she bade her maids accept it, which they did. She sat with me until sunset, when she rose to depart, and I accompanied her as far as the Tigris, and when about to take her place in her boat, she told me she had a request to make. I bade her command me. She then stated that a certain lady, mother of my children, had purchased a particular estate, adjoining hers; that she was anxious to add it to her property, and wanted me to ask my wife to take the purchase money and let her have it. Seeing that this was the reason for her visit, I asked her to stop where she was, and while she remained in the boat, I went to speak to my wife, promised her the price, and obtained her sanction for the sale of the property. This I brought to 'Arīb, saying: Hereby I present you with the property of which I have guaranteed the price to the owner, and to-morrow I will see that witnesses' names are signed on the back of the document, which you may take with you at once.—She thanked me and departed. Now the price of the property was a thousand dinars, so that her day's society and her setting my verses to music cost me two thousand, one hundred dinars.

(134) I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn al-Azraq after Abū Mohammed Ibn Durustawaihi the grammarian after Zajjāj, as follows. I, said the last of these, was employed in cutting glass, and, desiring to learn grammar, frequented Mubarrad for the purpose, who did not teach gratis, nor for any inadequate fee. He asked me what

my trade was. I replied glass-cutting, with which I earn a dirhem and a third or a dirhem and a half a day ; I wish you to exert yourself in instructing me, and I will pay you a dirhem every day, undertaking to continue the payment until death part us, whether I need the instruction or can dispense with it.—I attached myself to him and used to serve him in various ways, while regularly paying him the dirhem ; he on the other hand instructed me faithfully until I no longer needed him. A letter reaching him from the Banū Ma'zammah in the *S*arāt, requiring a teacher of grammar for their children, I begged him to nominate me, which he did. I accordingly went over there, and became their teacher, sending him thirty dirhems every month, and paying him such other attentions as I could. After a certain period 'Ubaidallāh b. Sulaimān applied to him for an instructor for his son Qāsim, and he told him that he knew no one suitable except a certain glass-worker who was with the Banu Ma'zammah in the *S*arāt. 'Ubaidallāh wrote to them, requesting them to resign me to him, which they did ; he then sent for me, and committed Qāsim to my charge. This was the commencement of my wealth. I continued to pay Mubarrad his daily dirhem until he died, nor did I neglect paying him other attentions to the best of my ability.

I was informed by Abu Mohammed Ya*h*yā b. Mohammed and Abu'l-Faraj al-Babbaghā that the following lines by Saif al-daulah had been recited to them by Abū Mohammed 'Abdallāh b. Mohammed, clerk :

> The water, they said, will return to the river,
> Though all of it's gone and the channels are filled ;
> Before it returns to its course, was my answer,
> And banks become green, all the frogs will be killed.

Abu Mohammed also recited to me some verses of his own on a famous singer of Baghdad named Mawāhib, who had been a slave of Abu 'Alī *H*asan b. Hārūn, the clerk, from whom she was bought by Abu'l-Fa*d*l 'Abbās

b. *H*usain the vizier, who, when he married the daughter of the vizier Abu Mohammed Muhallabī, presented her to Abū Mohammed, who manumitted her, and married her to one of his followers, named Ghālib and known as Sharzadi. At the present time she is in the service of the prince 'Izz al-daulah as artiste.

It is the perfection of the Pilgrimage that the camels should halt at the house where Mawāhib dwells
And were it not that it would be said " He is in love " we should have said wondrous things, the least of which would be more than miraculous

Abu'l-Faraj Babbaghā recited to me an ode of his own addressed to Saif al-daulah :

May the showers water well the inmate of that habitation, and may the lightning salute Barqat Thihmid.
Crowding like a torrent or like night, or like drops meeting the waves of a foaming sea.
The hoofs of whose steeds have, as it were, stamped crescents in the hard rock in men's sight.
And it might seem that the sun's eye was in pain and dust placed thereon in lieu of salve.

The ode contains the following description of a banner :

It has mastery over the spears, its slaves, gently doth it elicit the secrets of the lazy winds.
It speaks to them though dumb, and they understand its utterance, and their breezes rise in reply.
Restless, as though the sky were too narrow for it, always leaping and menacing.
It might seem that the spirit of its owner said to it : stretch out, climb, mount the steps of glory !
Glory is a pinnacle whose comfort a man attains not unless he strives.
He is not meant for rule whom his spirit apart from his ancestry raises not thereunto.

At the end of the ode he describes it as follows :

(136) Here are garments of praise wherewith my gratitude has thought fit to clothe thee : unique is the poet and unique his theme !
When I unfolded their precious embroideries upon thee, glory said to thee : wear them out and win new ones !

He also recited to me a poem of his own wherein he consoles Saif al-daulah for the death of his son Abu'l-Makārim ; it begins :

Our joy in thee surpasses our thought of troubles : grief cannot overpower our delight.
If fate spare thee, can gratitude be disturbed by any cause ?
How long shall the world cheat us with her tinsel, and never bring us any good thence ?
She delights us with pleasures whose consequences bring trouble ; we fly, but destiny pursues.

He states that Saif al-daulah effected the ransom of prisoners on the bank of the Euphrates in the year 355, this costing him 500,000 dinars. He rescued all the Moslem prisoners whom he could rescue from the Byzantine country. He purchased every prisoner of the humbler class for $83\frac{1}{3}$ Byzantine dinars ; whereas in exchange for the more distinguished he surrendered distinguished Byzantines whom he held captive. It was a terrible affair as many who were present have informed me. For Saif al-daulah it is an eternal glory and recompense. Abu'l-Faraj composed a poem on this occasion which he recited to me. It commences

Wealth is only what brings praise ; might is only what keeps off the foe.

He says with reference to the ransoming :

And thou didst ransom after ten days out of the enemy men who, had it not been for thee, would never at all have known ransom.
They were the slaves of thy bounty, then thou didst purchase them, so they became thy slaves by gift and by purchase.
Captivity is a form of death : long lay they therein, and thou hast restored them to life.
(137) And thou didst guarantee the life of Abu Firās to glory, what time others were aloof from him.
He is indeed the moon, long concealed, again revealed and perfect in brightness.
It is a day wherein thy bounty has freed the captives and thy munificence captivated princes.

At a meeting in my father's house Muqtadir was once the subject of conversation, and one of those present

declared him to have been imbecile. My father said to him : Hush ; this was not the case. He was in reality of good understanding and sound judgment ; only he was self-indulgent. Once, when I was discussing him in private with Abu'l-*H*asan 'Alī b. 'Īsā, I heard him say : If only the man were to abstain from liquor for five days running his mind would clear and I should be talking to as clearheaded and as capable a business-man as any who could be found. If I were to say that if he were to abstain for this period he would be the equal in wisdom and judgment of Mu'ta*d*id, Ma'mūn, and their like among the Caliphs, I do not think I should be far out. It is nothing but constant drinking which makes him go wrong.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Yūsuf al-Azraq as follows : I heard, he said, Abu'l-Qāsim Salāmah, the Trustworthy, brother of Nuj*h* *T*ulūnī, narrate how 'Alī b. 'Īsā, 'Alī b. Mohammed *H*awārī, Nasr Qushūrī and himself, had agreed upon a certain plan in reference to certain important matters which had happened in the time of Muqtadir. When we had made up our minds, he said, we had an audience of Muqtadir, explained our plan to him, and demanded his permission for its execution. He told us it was wrong, and that the right course was something different. When we reflected on what he had said, we saw that his was the right course, which had escaped us. We accordingly adopted and carried out his plan, abandoning our own.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan that he had been told the following by the qā*d*ī Abu *T*ālib Ibn al-Buhlūl : (**138**) On the day of a certain function, he said, I presented myself at the Caliph's palace, and waited in my boat, while the judges, generals, and secretaries were also waiting in theirs for admission. I, being the only judge summoned, entered Muqtadir's presence, where I found Abū 'Alī Ibn Muqlah standing, he being vizier at the time. Muqtadir said to me : Your father was a mainstay, and you, thank God, are his successor. You see the

importunity of these slaves towards me and how they plague me with demands for money ; whereas if they were to lose me, they would be longing to have my days back again. I have made up my mind to sell my Nimrod estates at Ahwāz ; do you write to your deputy qā*d*ī there, bidding him come to an arrangement with A*h*mad b. Mohammed al-Barīdī for their sale, obtaining his assistance therein. I replied that if the matter was of such importance to the Commander of the Faithful, whose life God prolong, I would myself proceed thither for the purpose. The Caliph replied that he would not give me that trouble, but desired that I should write to my deputy about it. So when I had left the Palace, in obedience to his order I wrote to Abu'l-Qāsim 'Alī b. Mohammed Tanūkhī, who was my deputy at the time in the districts of Ahwāz, narrating to him what had occurred. As the days passed, Ibn Muqlah was dismissed and replaced by Abu'l-Qāsim Sulaimān b. *H*asan b. Makhlad, who sent his friend Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn al-*H*ārith to Ahwāz to replace Barīdī, and he added to the purchase price of the estates a vast sum, and wrote to Abu'l-Qāsim Tanūkhī informing him that out of that sum he reserved a large amount for his own private possession. Now I had previously harboured a grudge against Ibn al-*H*ārith, but kept it quiet. On the day of a function I descended the river as usual, and when we were in our boats, the deputy chamberlains came out summoning me by myself. While the other judges were still excluded, I mounted and presented myself before Muqtadir, in whose presence were Sulaiman and 'Alī b. 'Īsā (**139**). He was arranging matters and making grants with them, addressing and being addressed on various business. Muqtadir said to me : We are well satisfied with the conduct of your deputy judge in Ahwāz with regard to our orders about the Nimrod estates, and now Ibn al-*H*arith has written to say that he has added to the purchase money, and that the buyers have agreed to that addition, but decline to

pay it until I personally declare that I ratify the sale and will take no further addition or do anything of the sort. Do you now write to your deputy to the effect that I have made this declaration, and that he is to give them a sealed contract of sale.—I, wishing to annoy Ibn al-*H*ārith, observed that it would be necessary to state in my letter the amount of the increase. He turned to 'Alī b. 'Īsā with a look of disapproval, and the latter, who, I could see, was quaking, gave the figure of the increase. The Caliph then told me to insert that figure in my letter to my deputy. I invoked a blessing on him, and withdrew, but walked away slowly, as I wanted to hear what passed. I heard him say to 'Alī b. 'Īsā indignantly: What could be more disgraceful than this? Why did you not find out the amount of the increase at the start and mention it to me so that I need not have had to ask for further information?—He repeated these expressions, saying: What could be more disgraceful, or more improper?—He was thus maintaining the duty of sovereigns to state all that is needful about every affair, without any omission which compels the person whom they are addressing to demand further elucidation. He suggested at the end of his tirade that if I were to report this to the people, it would injure both him and his office. I then heard 'Alī b. 'Īsā assure him that I was his slave and the son of his slave and the recipient of his bounty, a nursling of his dynasty, whence nothing of the sort could be feared from me.

I was told by Abū 'Alī *H*usain b. Mohammed of Anbār, clerk, who repeated what he had heard from Sāfi al-*H*uramī, servant and freedman of Mu'ta*d*id, as follows: (**140**) I was walking one day, he said, in front of Mu'ta*d*id, when he was on his way to the private apartments, and when we had come to the door of the apartment belonging to Shaghab, mother of Muqtadir, he stopped and listened, and looked through a hole in the curtain. There he saw Muqtadir, at that time about five years of age, surrounded

by ten slave-boys of his own age. In front of him was a silver dish containing a cluster of grapes, which were a rarity in that season. The boy took a grape and then gave a grape apiece all round, and when he had finished one round he proceeded to eat another, as they had done, and so on till the grapes were finished. Mu'ta*d*id was bursting with rage, and went away without entering the apartment. Seeing him displeased, I asked him the reason of his conduct and for the emotion which he displayed. *S*āfī, he replied, were it not for Hell-Fire and the shame, I should kill that child to-day, for his death would be a benefit to the community. Sire, I said, Heaven forefend ! What has the boy been doing ? God protect you, sire. Curse Satan !—Fool, he rejoined, I understand what I am saying. I am a man who has managed a state, and set the world right when it was all wrong ; I have to die, and I know that after my death the people will elect a son of mine. They will place on the throne my son 'Alī (Muktafī) but I fancy his life will be short on account of the disease from which he suffers (*S*āfī said he meant tumours in the throat). He then will die ere long, and the people, unwilling to remove the sovereignty from my family, will find after him no-one older than Ja'far, whom they will therefore elect. He is now a child, and has the passion for munificence which you have seen just now displayed in his giving those lads the same as he took himself, sharing alike with them in a rarity, whereas greediness is natural in a boy. The women will get control of him, owing to his being so recently in their keeping, and he will apportion the money which I have hoarded just as he apportioned those grapes. He will squander the revenue of the world, till it is desolate, and the frontiers are lost, affairs disorganized, the revolutionaries come out, and events occur **(141)** which will lead to the general destruction of the 'Abbasid power.—Nay rather, Sire, I replied, God shall preserve you so that he may grow up in your lifetime, and reach

years of discretion in your time, studying your methods, and forming himself on your model, so that your fears will not be realized.—He answered : Remember what I am telling you, for it will be as I say.—He remained gloomy the whole day, and presently fortune dealt its stroke ; Mu'ta*d*id died, and Muktafī succeeded, but was shortlived, and when he died Muqtadir succeeded, exactly as Mu'ta*d*id had foretold, and whenever I stood at Muqtadir's side when he was drinking, and saw him under the influence of liquor calling for money, which was produced, and, when the talents were untied, distributing them among his wives and his slave-girls, or playing with them, and wasting or lavishing them in gifts, I recollected with tears the words of Mu'ta*d*id.

Another story of *S*āfī which he told was the following : One day, he said, I was standing by Muta*d*id's side, when he wished to scent himself. He bade us summon a certain perfumer, *i.e.* a servant who attended to the scent-store. When the man arrived, the Caliph asked him how much *Ghāliyah* he had. More than thirty china jars, he replied, made by various Caliphs. Which, he asked, is the best ?—What was made by Wāthiq, was the reply. Being told to bring it, he produced a vast jar, carried by a number of slaves with poles and a frame. When it was opened the *Ghāliyah* was found to be white with mould and solidified with age ; and it was exceedingly strong. Mu'ta*d*id was delighted with it, and passed his hand round the neck of the jar so as to take a little of what had adhered to it, without disturbing the top of the jar ; this he put on his beard, saying that he could not bring himself to ruffle the surface of this jar, and told them to remove it. It was accordingly removed. One day when Muktafī was Caliph, he sat down to drink, with me standing at his side ; wanting some *Ghāliyah,* he sent for the servant, and asking him about the different sorts, received a similar reply to that which had been given to

his father. When he demanded the *Ghāliyah* of Wāthiq, the self-same jar was produced, and was opened. The Caliph found it delicious, and told them to take out a little. They took (**142**) about thirty *mithqals*, of which the Caliph used at once as much as he wanted, and then called for a perfume-box which he possessed and put the remains therein for use as occasion required. When Muqtadir succeeded, he was one day sitting drinking with his slave-girls, with me at his side. Wishing to perfume himself, he called for the servant and asked the same questions and received the same answers as his father and brother. He then ordered all the different sorts of *Ghāliyah* to be brought. All the jars were produced, and he began taking out of one jar a hundred *mithqals*, and out of another fifty, and from some less, and from some more, which he flung about and distributed to the people present, until he came to the jar of Wāthiq, which he found specially good. He ordered a perfume-box to be brought, and they brought the very box that had belonged to Muktafi. Finding the jar not quite full, and the box to contain the measure of *Ghāliyah* of which not much had been consumed, he asked the reason, and was told in detail. He began to express astonishment at the meanness of his two predecessors and to comment unfavourably upon it, and then ordered the contents of the whole jar to be distributed among the slave-girls. He continued to extract it by the pound, while I was bursting with indignation, as I recollected the affair of the grapes and the prophecy of Mu'ta*d*id, until about half the jar had disappeared, when I said to him : Sire, this is the best sort of *Ghāliyah*, and the oldest, which cannot be replaced. Would not it be better to leave yourself some, and to distribute the rest out of the other jars ?—My tears flowed as I thought of the words of Mu'ta*d*id, and he out of shame before me ordered the jar to be removed. Only a few years of his caliphate had passed when all those

stores of *Ghāliyah* had been exhausted and he was compelled to have some compounded at a vast price.

Some one else—not Abu 'Alī—informed me that all those quantities of *Ghāliyah* and the gums and the ambergris in the stores were used in the mud-pie made by the Queen-mother. The story of this mud-pie is familiar with the lower classes, and I need not tell it at length; and indeed, finding that persons who are well acquainted with the affairs of the Caliphate absolutely deny the whole story (**143**) I have another reason for not relating it.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan al-Bursī, governor of Basrah, that he had been told by one of the sons of Is*h*āq of Shiraz known as Khiraqī, who had dealings with Muqtadir's mother (he gave me the man's name butI have forgotten it), how one day near the New Year's Day of Mu'ta*d*id she demanded of him a thousand pieces of exceedingly light Zahrī cloth; so, he said, I sent to collect them, and her messengers kept urging me to hurry, while her stewards were complaining of my slowness; at last however I completed the number, and when I came to the Palace the stewardess came forward and told me to sit down in my usual chamber, and send for tailors, whom I was to order to cut the stuff up into buttons of the size of cotton-pods, fill them in with rags and then stitch them up, so that they might serve instead of cotton-pods; they should then be soaked in oil of balsam and other fragrant and expensive oils, and be burned in stone censers on the tops of the walls on the night of the New Year instead of cotton-pods and clay censers. All this I did.

He continued: I used also to buy for her Dabīqī cloth, called sandal-cloth, because it was coarse and cut in sizes like sandals made by a cobbler, then steeped in musk and molten ambergris, and when it hardened was inserted between two layers of stuff in quantities sufficient

to sustain it. We used to fabricate numerous pieces of this sort, and pack them together, then gum them round with pieces of ambergris, and stick them together so that they became one piece. We used to make the first layer white and polished, and sew silk round, and furnish it with network entirely of silk like the nets that are plaited out of leather. It was then fit for wearing. He added that the Queen-mother's sandals were of this material, and that she never wore a pair more than ten days or thereabout, by which time it would show signs of wear and begin to crumble, meaning the loss of several dinars which it had cost. (**144**) When cast off by the Queen-mother it would be taken by the keepers or others, who would extract the musk and ambergris and appropriate them.

I was told by Abu'l-Qāsim al-Juhanī that Muqtadir once wanted to have a drinking party on a narcissus-bed in a comely garden in one of the small courts of the palace. One of the gardeners observed that the right plan was to manure the narcissus before the Caliph drank thereon, so that it might thrive and thicken. The Caliph said: What, employ dung on something that is to be in my presence and which I intend to smell !—The man replied that this was customary with all plants which people wanted to make luxuriant. What is the reason ? asked the Caliph.—The reason, he replied, is that the manure warms it and so aids its growth.—We, said the Caliph, will warm it without manure.—He then ordered an amount of musk to be ground equal to that of the manure required, and had the garden manured therewith. He then sat there drinking for a day and a night, and had his morning drink there also. When he rose he gave orders that it should be ransacked, so the gardeners and attendants pillaged all the musk, removing it from the narcissus-roots, which they pulled up with the soil so as to remove the musk. The garden in consequence became

a howling wilderness. But a vast sum of money had been expended on the price of the musk.

I was informed by Abu Is*h*āq *T*abarī, slave of Abu 'Umar the ascetic slave of Taghlib, who was in the service of the Banū *H*amdūn as follows: I was told, he said, by Abu Ja'far *H*amdūn how one day they were drinking with Rā*d*ī in a room covered with fair and precious fruit. It was suggested that they should sit down, and the Caliph ordered that a certain room should be carpeted and that fragrant herbs and water-lilies should be flung on the matting without flower vases or arrangements for the scents as is usually done. Do this, he said, at once, that we may remove thither. After a moment the servants stated that all was ready, and the Caliph bade us rise. We did so, and when he saw the room he bade the cupbearers (**145**) change the colour of the fragrant herbs by throwing over them a little pounded camphor, for it was not agreeable as it was. They consequently, he said, brought golden vessels containing pounded Rabā*h*ī camphor in pints, which they threw over the fragrant herbs, while the Caliph kept telling them to pour more and more until the herbs were covered with white, and looked like a green garment on which cotton fluff had been shaken or a sward on which hoarfrost had descended. Then he told them it was enough. I estimated the amount of camphor used at considerably over a thousand *mithqals*. We drank sitting on this, and when he arose he ordered it to be ransacked. My slaves got many *mithqals*, as they were among the servants, attendants, and menials who were allowed to plunder it.

When I was still a lad I heard Abu Bakr Mohammed b. Ya*h*yā al-*S*ūlī telling my father a long story about Rā*d*ī, containing some verses composed by him and a narrative, the whole of which did not remain in my memory at the time owing to my youth. My father

asked him to dictate it, which he did to a friend of my father's, as he sat in the latter's presence; the friend taking it down on the back of a note-book which he had been reading to me, and which contained other verses and narratives about Rā*d*ī, and is still in my possession. With the aid of that I refreshed my memory. The story was that he presented himself to Rā*d*ī at a time when the latter was building or demolishing—I am not sure which —and recited some verses. Rā*d*ī was seated on a tile opposite the workmen, while he with the other courtiers was standing. Being bidden to be seated in his presence each of them took a tile and sat down upon it. It happened, he said, that I had taken a couple of tiles which were stuck together with a piece of plaster, and seated myself on the two. When we rose the Caliph ordered our tiles to be weighed and their weight in dirhems (or dinars, I am not sure which) to be given to each of us. Hence my present was double that of any other of the courtiers in proportion to the weight of my tile.

I was told by 'Alī b. *H*asan al-*H*ājjī that the same story had been related to him by Rā*d*ī's (**146**) teacher Abu'l-*H*asan al-'Arūdī, who however did not mention the double present received by *S*ūlī, and spoke of "myself and all the courtiers." Rā*d*ī had many merits, and was the last Caliph to do many things. He was the last to to compose verse: to command the armies himself: to administer the finance: to preach from the pulpit on Fridays: to sit with companions and entertain courtiers: to maintain the practice of the original caliphate in the matter of establishment charges, gratuities, gifts, service, pensions, treasury, kitchen, wines, entertainments, officials, chamberlains, etc.: and the last to travel in the style of the original caliphs, for though Muttaqi and Mu*t*i' afterwards travelled repeatedly, the style was not the same.

I was informed by Abu'l-Qāsim al-Juhanī after Abū Mohammed Ibn *H*amdūn after his father, that Muta-

wakkil desired that every article whereon his eye should fall on the day of a certain drinking-bout should be coloured yellow. Accordingly there was erected a dome of sandal-wood covered and furnished with yellow satin, and there were set in front of him melons and yellow oranges and yellow wine in golden vessels ; and only those slave-girls were admitted who were yellow with yellow brocade gowns. The dome was erected over a tesselated pond, and orders were given that saffron should be put in the channels which filled it in sufficient quantities to give the water a yellow colour as it flowed through the pond. This was done, and as the drinking-bout was protracted their supplies of saffron were exhausted and safflower was used as a substitute, they supposing that he would be intoxicated before this was exhausted, or they could incur reproach. It was exhausted, and when only a little remained they informed him, fearing that he would be angry if the supply stopped, while the want of time made it impossible for them to purchase more from the market. When they told him, he blamed them for not having laid in a large stock ; and telling them that if the yellow water ceased, his day would be spoiled, he bade them take fabrics that were dyed yellow with *qasab* (?)[1] and soak them in the channel (**147**) that the water might be coloured by the dye which they contained. This was done, and all the fabrics of this sort in the treasury were exhausted by the time he was intoxicated. The value of the saffron, safflower and ruined fabrics was estimated and came to fifty thousand dinars.

This story is parallelled by one told by numbers of people. This is how when *H*asan b. Sahl gave his daughter Būrān in marriage to Ma'mūn at Fam al *S*ul*h* wood was lacking in the kitchen on the wedding day when it was most wanted. He being informed of it, ordered that olive oil and other greases should be poured over a

[1] A name of various plants, see Dozy.

quantity of coarse linen till the latter was saturated, and that this should be set alight under the pots. Meanwhile he sent messengers in search of wood. A vast quantity of the linen was consumed before wood could be procured. I myself witnessed a scene in which Abū Mohammed Muhallabī, who was vizier at the time, having on three successive days purchased roses to the value of a thousand dinars, had them thrown into a large pool in a palace of his called the House of the Pool, and instituted a drinking-bout on the pool, whose contents were afterwards given up to be plundered. In the pool there was a fine fountain, into which the roses were thrown, while others were strewn in his rooms. This made a long story.

Abu'l-Qāsim son of Abu 'Abdallāh Barīdī in Basrah drank over roses valued at twenty thousand dirhems on one day when roses were cheap there, and the Sultan could cheapen them as he chose ; into the roses he threw twenty thousand light dirhems, equal to half the same number of ordinary dirhems in weight : numerous fine pieces of *nadd*, fine pieces of camphor, and figures, to play *shadgulli* with. The attendants afterwards plundered the roses with the dirhems and scent which they contained, and the entertainment is said to have cost three thousand dinars with the fees of the singing-girls, the price of the perfume, and what was spent on the table, the liquor and the ice that day. So my father was informed at the time by the slave-dealer Abu'l-'Abbās known as the Syrian, in my hearing ; he showed us some of the dirhems and stated that he had picked them up (**148**) with the slaves. This Syrian was unique in his profession ; he used to accompany Abū 'Abdallāh Barīdī as slave-dealer, and used to buy both slave-girls and ordinary singers, to sell to Barīdī ; at times the latter would dislike a slave-girl and return to the dealer, without any monetary transaction. Then Abu'l-'Abbās's business began to extend, and he purveyed for the public ; then he went a step further and used to present him with singing women,

or produce them in his presence, and if the men jested and sported with them, or even went beyond this, he would make no objection, and would get *douceurs* for this, as I am informed, from many quarters. In addition he was a successful buffoon. Once when he presented himself before Abū Yūsuf Barīdī, the latter flung a valuable satin cushion at him. The Syrian caught it and was hastening to hand it to his attendant to take home. What, said Abū Yūsuf, have you taken possession of it ?—Ought I, he replied, God lengthen your lordship's life, to return it to where it came from ?—No, you —— was the reply ; take it without the blessing of God. He then handed it to his attendant.

Among the stories about him is that he was a notorious procurer, and on bad terms with a haberdasher of Basrah named Ādamī. News reached him that it was the intention of the qā*d*ī Ja'far b. 'Abd al-Wā*h*īd Hāshimī to accept this person as witness ; the story had really no foundation, being merely a rumour. Coming to the qā*d*ī, who allowed him to jest with him as an old acquaintance, he said : Sir qā*d*ī, would you please accept my evidence ? The qā*d*ī replied mockingly : Things have not come to such a pass that a man of your character can be accepted. What, Abu'l-'Abbās, has induced you to take this step ?—I was informed, he replied, that you are prepared to accept Ādamī ; now both of us acted as procurers for Barīdī, so accept me also. The qā*d*ī laughed and said he would accept neither the one nor the other.

(149) I was told by Abū 'Alī A*h*mad b. Mūsā *H*amūlī, companion of Mu'izz al-daulah as follows : Once, he said, we were standing in the presence of our lord the prince (meaning Mu'izz al-daulah) when there entered Abū Makhlad, who, seeing him seated on a very handsome new seat of satin which he had had made in Tustar, and which had cost him two thousand dinars,

said to him : Prince, get off the seat, for there is something on it.—The prince, not understanding his meaning, moved off it, when the other pulled at it, and raised a portion of it on his shoulder, and then stood up.—Where, Bughā, are you going, asked the prince in Dailemite.—To my boat, replied the other, carrying this bit by bit, as you see. Who is going to oppose me or will venture to do so ?—No one, said the prince, laughing. So he conveyed the seat with its appurtenances complete, I assure you, on his back to his boat, and I saw him doing so, and carrying it all away.

This Abū Makhlad was a man of great liberality and cupidity such as is found only among the Persians. One day he entered the presence of the Caliph Mu*t*ī', and saw in the room a vast rug of yellow poplin and embroidery, fit for a Caliph. When he saw it, he was amazed, and said to his secretary Abu A*h*mad Shirāzī : I should like to do with this as I did with the seat of Mu'izz al-daulah ; for the story of his carrying it off on his back was by this time celebrated. Abū A*h*mad told him that a trick of that sort could not be played in the Caliph's court ; for with the Caliphs jesting might only be practised in private, whereas that was a public audience. But, he said, as I see how much you admire it, I will procure it for you as a present. (**150**) When the function was over, Abū A*h*mad, as he went out, found the man sitting in the vestibule. What is this, Sheikh, he asked.—You had better go back, he replied, and tell your master that I shall not go away without that rug ; had it not been for my respect for your advice, I should have taken it as I took the seat. Abū A*h*mad went back and told the whole story to the Caliph, who ordered it to be taken to the man's boat, and he went off with it accordingly.

I was told this by Abū A*h*mad al-Fa*d*l b. 'Abd al-Ra*h*mān b. Ja'far of Shīrāz and I heard Ibn Diyah the carpet-merchant, who was head of the trade in Baghdad

and had greater experience of furniture there than anyone else, narrate in a large assembly how he had seen furniture belonging to Abū Makhlad brought out by the latter for him to value; I valued it, he said, and though I put it at the lowest figure, the price came to two hundred thousand dinars, and even so I do not know whether that represented the whole of his furniture, or whether he had more besides.

I was told by the qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan Mohammed son of the qā*d*ī 'Abd al-Wā*h*id Hāshimī that a large sum was owed to a leading tradesman by one of the generals, who deferred paying; and, said the tradesman, I made up my mind to appeal to Mu'ta*d*id, because whenever I went to the general, he had the door shut against me and let his slaves revile me, whereas if I tried mild methods and used mediation, it was useless. I even appealed to 'Ubaidallah b. Sulaimān, but he did not help me. Then one of my friends said to me: I will recover your money, and you need not appeal to the Caliph. Come with me at once.—So, said he, I arose and he brought me to a tailor in Tuesday Street, an old man who was seated, sewing and reading the Quran. Telling him my story, he asked him to call on the general, and see me righted (**151**). The general's residence was near the tailor's, and the latter started with us. As we were walking, I lagged behind and said to my friend: You are exposing this aged man, yourself, and me to serious annoyance. When he comes to the door of my debtor, he will be cuffed, and you and I with him. For the general paid no attention to the remonstrances of So-and-so, and So-and-so, nor even troubled about the vizier. Is he likely to trouble about our friend here?—My friend laughed and said: Never mind, walk on and keep quiet.—We arrived at the general's door, and when his slaves saw the tailor, they treated him with reverence, and rushed to kiss his hand, which he would not permit. Then they said: What has brought you, sir? The

master is riding, and if it be something which we can do, we shall do it at once ; but if not, then come in and sit down till he comes.—This encouraged me, and we went inside and sat down. Presently the man came, and when he saw the tailor, he was most respectful, and said : Before I change my clothes you must give me your orders. The tailor then spoke to him about my affair. He assured the tailor that he had not in his house more than five thousand dirhems, but begged him to take those and his silver and gold harness as pledges for the rest which he would pay within a month. I readily assented, and he produced the dirhems and the harness to the value of the remainder ; of this I took possession, and made the tailor and my friend attest the arrangement whereby the pledge for the remainder of the money was to remain in my possession for a month, and if this term were exceeded I was at liberty to sell it and recoup myself from the proceeds. After obtaining their attestations I left with them ; and when we reached the tailor's place I flung down the money before him, saying : Sir, through you God has restored me my property, and I shall be pleased if you will accept a quarter, a third, or a half of it, which I gladly offer.—Friend, he replied, you are indeed in a hurry to return evil for good ! Take yourself off with your property, with the blessing of God !—I said that I had one more request.—When he bade me utter it, I asked him to tell me the reason why the general had yielded to him, when he had treated the greatest men in the empire with contempt. Sir, he replied, you have got what you wanted, so please do not interrupt me in the occupation by which I earn my livelihood (**152**). When I insisted, he said : I have been a leader of prayer and have been teaching the Quran in this mosque for forty years, earning my living by tailoring which is the only trade I know. A long time ago, after saying the sunset prayer, as I was going homewards I passed by a Turk, who was in this house. Suddenly a

woman of fair countenance passed by, and the Turk who was drunk seized hold of her, trying to drag her into the house, while she resisted and called for help, which was not forthcoming, no one coming forward to rescue her from the Turk in spite of her cries. Among other things she was saying that her husband had sworn he would divorce her if she spent a night away from his house, and if the Turk compelled her to disobey this he would ruin her home in addition to the crime which he would be committing, and the disgrace which he would bring upon her. I went up to the Turk and stopped him, requesting him to let the woman go, but he struck me on the head with a club that was in his hand, giving me a painful wound, and forced the woman to enter the house. I went home, washed off the blood, bound up the wound, and when the pain had eased went out to say the evening prayer. When that was over I said to the congregation : Come with me to this godless Turk, to remonstrate with him, and not leave him until we make him release the woman. They rose up, and we went and made a great noise at his door, and presently he came out at the head of a number of his slaves, raining blows upon us, and he singled me out, striking me a blow of which I nearly died. My neighbours carried me to my dwelling in a dying condition. My family treated my wounds, and I slept, but very slightly owing to the pain, and I woke up at midnight and could sleep no longer as I thought about the affair. Then I said to myself : The fellow must have been drinking all night, and will not know the time ; if I sound the call to prayer, he will suppose that the dawn has commenced, and will release the woman so that she can reach her house before dawn. She will thus escape from one of the two disasters, and her home will not be ruined in addition to what has befallen her. So I went out to the mosque walking as best I could, and mounting the minaret, sounded the call, and then sat down and looked out upon the street, waiting to see the woman

come out ; if she did not come out, I would start prayer, that there might be no doubt in the Turk's mind that it was morning (**153**) and he might release her. Only a little while elapsed and the woman was still with him when the street became filled with horse and foot, with torches, and men crying : Who is it who has just been calling to prayer ? Where is he ?—At first I was too terrified to speak, but then I thought I would address them and perhaps get help for the woman. So I called out from the minaret : I was the person.—They said to me : Come down and answer the Commander of the Faithful.—Thinking to myself that deliverance was near, I descended, and went with them, and found them to be a company of guards with Badr, who brought me before Mu'ta*d*id. When I saw him, I shook and trembled, but he encouraged me, and then asked me what had induced me to alarm the Moslems by sounding the call to prayer at a wrong time, so that people who had business would go about it prematurely, and those who meant to fast would restrain themselves at a time when they were allowed to break their fast. I said : If the Commander of the Faithful will grant me amnesty, I will tell the truth.—He told me my life was safe. I then recounted to him the story of the Turk, and showed him the marks upon me, and he ordered Badr at once to bring the soldier and the woman. I was taken apart, and after a short time the soldier and the woman were produced, and Mu'ta*d*id proceeded to ask her about the affair, which she narrated as I had done. Mu'ta*d*id then ordered Badr to send her at once to her husband with a trustworthy escort, who should bring her into her house and explain the affair to her husband, with a request from the Caliph to him not to send her away, but to treat her kindly. He then summoned me, and while I stood listening, he began to question the soldier as follows : How much, fellow, is your allowance ? He gave the amount. Your pay ?—So much.—Your perquisites ?—So much.—Then

he began to enumerate the gratuities which the man received, and the Turk acknowledged to an enormous amount. Then he asked him how many slave-girls he possessed. He gave the number. The Caliph said to him : Were not these and the ample fortune which you enjoyed sufficient for you, but you must needs violate the commands of God, and injure the majesty of the Sultan, and not only perpetrate this offence, but in addition assault the person who tried to make you do right ? The soldier was conscience-smitten and could make no reply. The Caliph then ordered them to fetch a sack, (**154**) some cement-makers' pestles, bonds and fetters. The man was bound and fettered, and put into the sack, and the attendants were then ordered to pound him with the pestles. This was done in my sight, and for a time the man screamed, then his voice stopped as he was dead. The Caliph ordered the body to be thrown into the Tigris, and told Badr to seize the contents of his dwelling. Then he said to me : Sir, whenever you see any kind of wrong committed, great or small, or anything of the sort great or small, then order it to be righted and remonstrate about it, even with him (pointing to Badr) ; and if anything befalls you and you are not listened to, then the sign between us is that you sound the call to prayer at about this time ; I, hearing your voice, will summon you and will do this to any one who refuses to listen to you, or injures you.—I invoked a blessing on him and departed ; then the rumour spread among the Dailemites [1] and the Turks, and I have never asked any one to right another or to desist from wrong-doing, but he has obeyed me to my satisfaction for fear of Mu'ta*d*id, so that up to this time I have not had to sound the call.

I was told by my father the following which he had heard from Ibn *H*amdūn : One night, he said, I was

[1] These are usually meant by the *auliyā* (noted here).

drinking with Mu'ta*d*id when a despatch came. When he read it, he stopped drinking and showed signs of vexation. He proceeded to send for 'Ubaidallah b. Sulaimān, who was immediately fetched, and was nearly dead with alarm, supposing himself under arrest. The Caliph flung the letter to him, which was from the secret service agent in Qazwīn, stating that a certain Dailemite had been discovered there, having entered the place disguised. He bade 'Ubaidallāh write immediately to the war-minister and the finance-minister, in violent terms, threatening them with death for permitting this to happen; and after reproaching them bitterly, to demand that they produce this person, even from the furthest parts of the Dailemite country; and to inform them that their lives would be hostages for his until he was produced, and give them orders that no fresh person should be allowed to enter the place, and no-one have a passport to leave, lest any Dailemite should contrive to enter secretly; and that they should be more careful and vigilant than ever. I was to add that we were sending (**155**) them troops and to be exceedingly emphatic. 'Ubaidallah promised to carry out these instructions, and wished to go home to write the letters, but was told by the Caliph to stay where he was, write the letters with his own hand, and show them to the Caliph. He was then made to sit down, agitated as he was, and wrote the letters, which he showed to the Caliph, who, when he was satisfied, ordered a bag to be brought to his presence, into which the letters were put; it was then despatched. 'Ubaidallāh was further ordered to send with it some one who would bring the news of its arrival at Nahrawān and its proceeding thence. The Caliph then departed, and 'Ubaidallāh also arose, the former returning to the room in which we had been drinking; he seemed to be very wearied, flung himself on his back for a time, and then recommenced drinking. I asked his permission to speak, and when it had been

granted, I said : You were enjoying yourself, when you received certain intelligence about which you might have waited till to-morrow to give the orders which you gave immediately, but instead vexed your mind, broke off your drinking, spoiled your pleasure, alarmed your vizier, and frightened his family and his friends by sending for him at so inconvenient a time, only to give him instructions which you might well have left till the morrow.—Ibn *H*amdūn, he replied, this is no business of yours ; still, as I gave you permission to speak, know that the Dailem are the worst nation in the world, the most cunning, the most noxious, and the hardest-hearted. I assure you I became terrified for the fate of the empire at the thought of their getting an opportunity of entering Qazwīn secretly, and a number of them collecting there, who might attack the inhabitants and make themselves masters of the place, which is the frontier town. To recover it from them would take long, and the empire would be so seriously weakened in consequence that the fall of the dynasty might be the result. I fancied that if I delayed dealing with the matter for one hour, an opportunity would be lost, and they would come against Qazwīn ; and assuredly, if they once got possession thereof they would spring upon me from beneath this throne of mine, and seize the capital. Hence I could not enjoy my liquor nor permit an hour of my time to pass idly without some precautions being taken against them. Hence I acted as you saw.

(**156**) I was told by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. al-Azraq that in the year 317 (began Feb. 14, 929 A.D.) he had recently been employed in the ministry, the vizier at the time being A*h*mad b. 'Ubaidallāh Khas*ī*bī, when he had to compose letters for the Sultan from the ministry to Ibn Abi'l-Sāj, bidding him come to the capital to fight the Qarma*t*ians. The answer came to the Caliph, not to the ministry, and I heard the senior clerks discussing his letter, wherein he asserted that he was at a frontier more seriously menaced

than the Byzantine frontier, in face of a wall more massive than that of Gog and Magog ; if, he said, I neglect it, something more serious than the Qarmatian danger will issue therefrom, and it may well lead to the ruin of the empire in all regions. The clerks began to mock thereat, saying: At what frontier is he stationed, and whom is he facing ? Only the Dailem, who are agriculturists. Probably he wants to amuse himself and to defy the Sultan. Further letters were therefore composed wherein he was ordered to leave his present occupation and come home. He obeyed, marched against the Qarmatians, and was killed by them. But a short time elapsed after his death before Qāsim b. *H*asan the 'Alawid emissary and his commander Mākān the Dailemite marched from Tabaristan against Rayy and wrested it from the possession of the Sultan ; then Asfār b. Shirūyah the Dailemite marched against Tabaristan and wrested it from them. The emissary went back to fight him, but was slain by Asfār, whom fortune now favoured ; marching against Rayy he was assailed by Mākān ; Mardāwīj the Jīlite, one of the followers of Asfār rose against him, killed him and got possession of his armies and his provinces, seized Rayy, the Jabal and the adjoining provinces ; those, which had been ruled by Ibn Abi'l-Sāj, had been distributed among a number of governors who neglected the administration. The power of the Dailem continued to increase while that of the Sultan progressively declined, further breaches were made therein and revolts became constant until Muqtadir was slain, Mardāwīj advanced to Ispahan on his way to Baghdad, and Shīraj b. Lailā came to (**156**) Ahwāz and seized it. The prince 'Imād al-daulah 'Ali b. Buwaihi was at the time the deputy of Mardāwīj in Karaj ; he, seducing the troops from their allegiance, led them to Arrajān in his own name ; being threatened by Mardāwīj with a punitive expedition, he adopted a mild tone, and promised to recognize Mardāwīj as his superior, sending as hostage

his brother the prince Rukn al-daulah. He then at the head of seven hundred Dailemites proceeded to attack Yāqūt, who had a vast force, and got possession of Fars, with all its hoarded wealth. When he had obtained this amount of success, Mardāwīj bethought him of sending an army against him, to take him prisoner, and then proceed to Baghdad ; he was however assassinated by his Turkish soldiers, and his men joined the prince 'Imād al-daulah, who, having seized Fars and driven out Yāqūt, had become a powerful sovereign. After a few years he sent his brother the prince Mu'izz al-daulah to Ahwāz, whose might continued to increase until he got possession of Baghdad, so that the prophecies of Mu'ta*d*id and Ibn Abi'l-Sāj were fulfilled. The Dailemites became rulers of the world, and obtained provinces in addition to those governed by the Buwaihid princes, after it had become a proverbial question that was asked by people when they suffered injury : What is the case with us ? Are we in the hands of Dailemites or Turks ?

I was told by the qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan Mohammed b. 'Abd al-Wā*h*id Hāshimī a story which he had heard from Abū 'Alī *H*asan b. Ismā'īl b. Is*h*āq, the qā*d*ī, who was a companion of Mu'ta*d*id and allowed to take liberties with him. One day, he said, we were drinking with Mu'ta*d*id, until Badr presented himself, and said : Sire, they have brought the draper from Birket Zalzal. Mu'ta*d*id thereupon left the drinking-room, and retired to a chamber behind it, so close that we could see and hear. A curtain was then let down so as to screen it, the Caliph put on a qabā and, taking a spear in his hand, sat down with the expression of a man enraged and anxious to inspire terror. Hence (**158**) we, notwithstanding our familiarity with him, were alarmed. A feeble old man was introduced, whom the Caliph questioned in a terrible voice : Are you the draper who said that yesterday ?—The man fainted, and was ordered to be taken away until he had recovered his senses. He was then brought back and the

Caliph said: What, does a man like you dare to say "the Moslems have no one to look after their interests"? Where do I come in, and what is my business?—He said: Commander of the Faithful, I am a tradesman, who understand nothing but thread and cotton, and how to talk to women and common people. A man passed by, with whom we did business buying his goods, and when we found his weight short, I said that, meaning the Censor and no one else; I swear that I only referred to the Censor, and promise never to say the like again.—The Caliph said: The Censor shall be summoned and severely reprimanded for neglecting to interfere in such a matter, and shall be told to set it right, and to look after the travellers and tradesmen and bring them into order.—He then told the old man to go, and that no harm should befall him. He returned to us amused and diverted, and recommenced his potations. Under the influence of the wine I said: Sire, you know how inquisitive I am; have I permission to make a remark?—When he had given it, I said: Your majesty was agreeably occupied in drinking, but left it off to go and talk to a vulgar cur, for whom it would have been sufficient to be shouted at by one of the infantry of the district magistrate; not satisfied with letting this creature come into your majesty's presence, you changed your costume, armed yourself and personally examined him: all for the sake of a phrase commonly uttered by the vulgar, who do not even assign it any particular meaning.—*H*asan, he replied, you do not know what may be the consequences of such a saying. If that sort of thing circulates among the people, one takes it up from another, they are emboldened to repeat it, get into the habit of uttering it until it becomes to them like the moral law. Such a thing easily (**159**) instils disaffection towards the government and the religion, and the stirring up of revolts against the Sultan. The most effective mode of dealing with such a case is to stop the evil at its source. This man's experience will have

turned his head. After leaving the palace he will exaggerate many times over the reprimand which he received, and multiply the sternness and severity which he witnessed, and overstate the determination which he heard that the duty of the government should be discharged and the law take its course. Our vigilance will be advertised among the people, who will learn that I let no word uttered by one of them escape me, and do not fail to demand an explanation and obtain satisfaction from him who utters it. This will save me many operations; the man will warn them all, and will in future control himself. A source of mischief will be stopped which if allowed to flow would have required for the repair of the damage which it would cause a number of serious measures, which a few words have now rendered unnecessary.—We invoked blessings on him and were loud in his praises.

I was informed by a bailiff in the employ of Abu'l-Qāsim b. Abī 'Allān, lent me by him to employ on my estate in Ahwāz, who according to the latter was older than himself, and who so far as I know was trustworthy. His name was Dhu'l-Nūn b. Mūsā. When I was a lad, he said, Mu'ta*d*id was in the districts of Ahwāz. One day I started out from a village of Manādhir called Shan*t*af, going in the direction of 'Askar Mukram. I had with me a donkey which besides myself was carrying a load of melons, which I was bringing from the village with the view of selling them in the town, *i.e.*, 'Askar. I met on my way a vast host, which I did not recognize, of which certain troopers hurried towards me, one of whom took three or four melons and moved on. I was afraid that I should be suspected owing to the deficiency in the number, and began to howl, while the ass which I was riding was braying in the highroad, and the army was passing. Suddenly there advanced a great company, preceded by a solitary man, who stopped and said: Why are you howling and shrieking, my lad?—When I told

him the facts, he turned to the troops and said : Bring me the man at once.—He might have been just behind him, for he was produced immediately. He (**160**) asked me whether it was the right man, and when I said it was, he ordered him to be scourged, while he himself stood, and I remained on my donkey, and the troops halted. He proceeded to call the trooper, who was being scourged, hound and a variety of other names, and to ask him : Had you not with you the price of these melons ? Could you not afford to buy them ? Could you not restrain yourself ? Is it your property or your father's ? Had not he all the trouble of sowing and watering and to pay for them and to pay the tax upon them ?—And he went on asking question after question of this sort, while the trooper was being belaboured with blows which reached a hundred in number. After this he ordered the trooper to be raised, and the army to proceed. The soldiers began to be abusive saying : Should so-and-so have received a hundred lashes on account of this farm-labourer of Khūzistān, plague on him ?—I asked some of them about the matter, and he told me that it was prince Abu'l-'Abbās (Mu'ta*d*id).

I was told by the qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh, that he had been informed by Abū 'Abdallāh Mūsawī of the family of 'Alī in Baghdad how in the year 334 (began Aug. 13, 945) when prices were high, he had sold an average *kurr* of wheat for twenty thousand dirhems to Mu'izz al-daulah who was at that time encamped west of Baghdad, which he was besieging. He added that before delivering the wheat he received the money safely in his house. He then produced the grain, which they measured and then took. God deliver us from such another experience !

Abu'l-Faraj 'Abd al-Wā*h*id b. Na*s*r b. Mohamme called Babbaghā recited to me a poem of his own addressed to Saif al-daulah, in which he mentions a battle fought by him with some of the Arabs. It runs thus :

The law of the sword is of judgments most fair;
No pen writes so fine as the point of the spear:
Recipients of bounty but meet their desert
If acts of ingratitude lead to their hurt.
(161) When men are corrupted by honours bestowed,
Then humiliation is all for their good.

The last two couplets are well suited to be current proverbs. In the poem there are other good sayings, *e.g.*

Prostrate didst thou leave them as though they had quaffed
From beaker of thine some too generous draught;
So near yet so distant, as though in disdain
The heads left the members, they lay on the plain.

I heard Ibrāhīm b. *H*asan the cloth-merchant say: There was a fire in Karkh in the forties of the fourth century, and thereby I lost goods in my shop and house to the value of two hundred thousand dirhems, apart from the value of the building. How much, I asked, was that? A yet larger sum, he replied. But, he continued, God blessed what was left, and I replaced both building and capital, and there is no difference between my present fortune and what I had prior to the fire. Do you mean to tell me, I said, that the contents of your shop are worth two hundred thousand dirhems? That, he said, laughing, is a matter about which a tradesman must not be asked, nor will he tell the truth, if he is asked. I merely assert that I find no difference between my fortune now and what it was then, and thank God I am well off.—One of his friends however who knew his affairs said that the contents of the shop were worth more than that.

I was told the following by Abu'l-Qāsim Juhanī: Some recriminations, he said, took place between Mohammed b. Khalaf Wakī' the qā*d*ī and me in the presence of Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn al-Furāt, which led to hostility, and caused me to inquire into things which might be to his discredit. I discovered that he had a father of humble condition who was a boxmaker at the *T*āq Gate. I mounted my horse and went thither, and found him work-

ing with his hands at the boxes, and putting some questions to him found him quite incompetent and ignorant. So I went away and wrote to a number of the most eminent of the Witnesses on both sides of the Tigris and nobles of both families and the most distinguished merchants, clerks, and cultivators, inviting them to a meeting (**162**) at a great mosque that was there. A great crowd assembled. I mounted my horse, and when I reached the place I sent for Khalaf the boxmaker. They brought him to me just as he was when he had been disturbed at his work, with his tools and his hands stained, as I had instructed them. I then said to them: God exalt you, I have requested you to appear here in order that I might put some questions to this old gentleman and obtain your attestations, so be mindful of what occurs. Then I said: Shaikh, who are you? He replied: Khalaf son of so-and-so.—What relation to you, I asked, is Waqī' the qā*d*ī?—My son, he replied.—I asked those aldermen of the place who were present whether this was so, and they replied that it was. I said: You are in this condition notwithstanding the position of your son?—He said Because he is undutiful, God do unto him—cursing him. Then I said: Shaikh, do you know the Qur'an by heart?—I know, he answered, as much as I require for my prayers.—Do you know anything, I asked, about the Readings of the Qur'an?—He said No.—Have you ever written down Tradition?—No.—Have you repeated history, legend, literature or verse?—No.—I then went on enumerating the sciences and their branches, and in each case he replied No. Then I asked him whether he knew any grammar, metre, or logic. He said No. Then I said to the assembly: God exalt you, Wakī' is a mendacious person, who dabbles in learning and literature, and I cannot trust him not to make false statements about the Prophet and the sciences, and when this old gentleman dies, not to invent a chain of tradition, commencing "My father told me" or "My father

informed me," ascribing to him all sorts of falsehood. Hence I wished you to record this old gentleman's declaration that he has no connexion with this sort of subject, in order that his son may not after his death make any such claim concerning him; and to know besides the badness of his character as displayed in his unfilial conduct, and his unmanliness in leaving his father in such a condition.—Before we parted I got their attestation to what had passed put in the most damaging manner that I could contrive, and having got their consent, I proceeded with the report **(162)** to the audience chamber of the vizier. I let it remain in my shoe and conversed with Wakī' until I had occasion to insult him, when I said: Can you not keep quiet, you son of an ignorant box-maker?—When his colour changed I produced the report, and showed it to the vizier, asking him to send and summon Waki's father and see him himself. The vizier was amused, but Waki' was disgraced in his eyes, and was greatly troubled by my action.

Abu'l-Qāsim Juhanī was appointed our censor in Basrah by Abu Ja'far Saimarī, and I have heard our elders of that time say that they had no experience or record of any one who was so competent, kept the people in such order, and so free from deception, and so thoroughly understood the mysteries of goods and merchandise; indeed he might be thought unique, and he was so strict in making people do their duty that he became favourably known throughout the place on this account, and he was feared by the great, not to speak of the small. One day when he, accompanied by his force, passed by a mueddhin who was sounding the call to one of the prayers, people said "here is Juhanī." The mueddhin looking out and seeing him said: Praise be to God, who has given you no avenue against me.—Juhanī however bade his force arrest the man and bring him to the residence of the former. The mueddhin protested loudly, and his neighbours escorted him to the censor's residence,

where they were allowed to enter after the censor had alighted. They said to him : You have ordered the production of this mueddhin ; what avenue have you against him ?—He said to the mueddhin : I require you to swear to me that you do not enter the mosque with the same sandals as those with which you have entered the *latrina ;* for this nullifies the public prayer and is unlawful ; and that you do not sound the call when you are unclean.—The neighbours begged the censor to excuse the man from swearing, but the latter insisted that he must either swear or never enter the mosque again, and finally compelled him to take an oath. When he was about to go away, the Censor said to him : My friend, do you know now that I have an avenue against you, and that there are dealings between us, or do you not ?—He replied : God help you, I was mistaken and did not know.—Then, said the Censor, do not again express yourself on what does not concern you. Curiosity is dangerous.

(**164**) I was informed by Abu'l-'Abbās Na*s*r b. Mohammed the Witness, my father's deputy over the wharves of Ahwāz, as follows : Kaukabī, he said, was Censor with us before the brother of Umm Mūsā the Stewardess, and was strict, energetic and bold. A feud arose between him and the qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn 'Alī al-Sarrāj. For a time the Censor kept his hands off the qā*d*ī, then he unexpectedly presented himself at the gate of the former, who had taken to sitting in the mosque only twice a week. Taking up his station at the gate with his force, he bade them tell the qā*d*ī that he was not entitled to continue sitting in his house. Come forth, they were to say to him, to the mosque, where you will be within reach of the strong and the weak, as you are instructed in your deed of investiture. The retainers entering in conveyed this message and he was greatly disturbed, and sent out those Witnesses who were in his company to mollify the Censor. He however

declared that he would neither enter nor depart until the qā*d*ī rode to the mosque. The Witnesses however importuned until they had effected a reconciliation.

I was informed by the qā*d*ī Abū 'Umar 'Ubaidallāh b. *H*usain, known as Ibn al-Samsār, after Abū 'Alī Ibn Idrīs al-Jammāl, the Witness, after Abū 'Abdallāh Ibn Abī 'Auf, as follows : The reason, he said, of my association with 'Ubaidallāh b. Sulaimān was that one day I passed him in the mosque in the City and found him in the custody of a creditor for three hundred dinars—this was after his reverse. I was aware of his eminence, though we were not friends. I asked him why he was sitting there instead of coming to prayer. He said : I am in this man's custody for three hundred dinars.—I asked the creditor to grant him delay, but he declined. Then I said : I guarantee you the money ; only asking you to wait till after a week, when I will pay it to you. —The man demanded a written engagement, so I called for ink and paper, and wrote out an undertaking to pay the money in a month's time, with which he was satisfied and went away. 'Ubaidallāh rose and began to thank me, but I told him that he would complete my satisfaction if he would come home with me. I accordingly made him mount my ass, while I walked behind, until **(165)** we had reached my house, where we ate what had been prepared for the Friday after the custom of merchants. He then went to sleep, and when he woke I put before him a purse, saying : It may be that you are in straits, in which case I earnestly request you to take out of this as much as you wish.—He took some dinars and then rose and departed. My wife started rating me, telling me that I had guaranteed more than I could pay, and not satisfied with this had made him a present besides. I told her that I had been doing an act of kindness to a man of high birth and excellent character ; if God make him of use to me, well and good ; in any case the act would not be lost with God. Moreover I have put the

man off for some days by a promise which I have made him.—Two days after this conversation I received a letter from 'Ubaidallāh summoning me; and when I came to him, he said that some produce—only a little—had reached him from an estate that had escaped from the sale at the time of his reverse; its value was the amount that I had guaranteed; would I take it and sell it and settle with the creditor? I agreed to do this, and the produce was brought to me; but when I had sold it, I brought him the whole of the price and said to him: You are in need and I will put off the creditor by paying him part of the debt myself; meanwhile do you make yourself comfortable with this.—He urged me to take part, but I vowed that I would not do so. So I obtained a receipt from him for the price, and when the creditor came and importuned me, I paid him something and so put him off. Only a short time elapsed and 'Ubaidallāh was appointed vizier, and he immediately sent for me and set me in heaven, by rising up for me in his audience chamber. Through him I acquired my fortune and the position which I occupy.

I was told by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Yūsuf b. Ya'qūb b. al-Buhlūl the following from his father: Once, he said, when 'Ubaidallāh b. Sulaimān was vizier, I left his presence to go to the vestibule, when Ibn Abī 'Auf came out; thereupon the doorkeepers, chamberlains, and the rest all called out: Bring Abū 'Abdallāh's horse!—When the horse was brought for him to ride, the vizier came out with the same purpose, and when Abū 'Abdallāh Ibn Abī 'Auf saw him, he moved out of the way (**166**) and ordered his horse to be removed that the vizier's horse might come first. The vizier however swore that he would neither mount nor let his horse be brought until Ibn Abī 'Auf had mounted. So I saw the vizier standing and all the others standing in consequence, until the horse of Ibn Abī 'Auf had been brought, and he had mounted;

then came the horse of the vizier, and when he had mounted it, they rode off together.

I was also told the following by Abu'l-*H*asan after his father. When 'Ubaidallāh went to the Jabal and left as his deputy Qāsim, he did not treat Ibn Abī 'Auf in the style of his father; this vexed him, but he was afraid to send letters to Qāsim's father complaining of his conduct, lest they should fall into the hands of Qāsim. So he came and paid me several complimentary visits, without asking me any favour, until he had made a friend of me. Then he asked me to place his letters to the vizier inside the letters of the family of a friend of mine to him, this friend being one of the officers on service with 'Ubaidallāh. So I did this regularly and my friend used to deliver the letters secretly to the vizier, and send the replies, while letters of 'Ubaidallāh were coming privately to Qāsim containing violent menaces on the subject of Ibn Abī 'Auf. Qāsim in consequence had agents on the roads who took the letters of most people, and thus he got acquainted with their contents, but could find no letter from Ibn Abī 'Auf, and though he was bursting with wrath he could not discover how he had been eluded until the arrival of 'Ubaidallāh.

He continued: Now in those days I was asked by one of the inhabitants of the frontier to intercede with Ibn Abī 'Auf to obtain his help for some of his relatives who were prisoners in the Byzantine territory. At first I refused, knowing that he was after all a merchant; but when he insisted, I wrote him a letter. Presently the man came to thank me, stating that Ibn Abī 'Auf had given him forty dinars. Years passed and Ibn Abī 'Auf asked me to rent him some land liable to inundation in my Ahwāz estates, to grow those water-melons which were afterwards thought to be called after my father's slave, whereas in reality they are called after 'Abdallāh Ibn Abī 'Auf. I rented it to him for a handsome sum, and he grew the melons (**167**) which throve. When I

demanded the rent he deducted the forty dinars which he had bestowed on the man of the frontier owing to my mediation.

The cause of his social collapse according to what I have been told by the qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh was the affair of his daughter. He states that it got abroad in Baghdad that he, entering his house, found with his daughter a man who was not a relation. He arrested the man and determined to have him scourged with whips. He was advised not to do it, since and he his daughter would thereby be dishonoured. Let the man go, they said, and fetter the woman and guard her. —He declined to take this advice, called in the chief of the police and had the man scourged at the door of his house. The man was a wit and while undergoing the punishment quoted the lines

> If I have sinned, she must a sinner be ;
> If she be sinless, I from guilt am free.

Ye people, can one of a guilty pair be punished and not the other ? Either bring my fellow-culprit out, or release me.—Thereby Ibn Abī 'Auf was disgraced and discredited, became the butt of the poets and public speakers, and the people generally, and was socially ruined. Of the things said on the subject was the poem of Ibn Bassām which began

> Ye people, of doomsday the trump has been heard ;
> When the libertine's scourged and his paramour spared.

And he composed a first verse supplementary to it, viz.

> How, consort of Laila, keep peace with your wife,
> Yet fight against me, when we both made the strife ?

I was informed by Abū A*h*mad 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar al-Sarrāj of Wāsit, called al-*H*ārithī, after Abū Bakr after Yūsuf b. Ya'qūb, the Qur'an-teacher of Wāsit, as follows : When al-Nā*s*ir lidīn Allāh al-Muwaffaq entered Wāsit after the commander of the Zanj, whilst Mu'tamid was staying at Fam al-*S*il*h*, and negotiations had taken

place between them for the dethronement of Mufawwi*d* and the installation as successor of some person to be appointed by Muwaffaq, I was summoned by the latter with a number of the Witnesses of Wāsit, (**168**) and we were requested to proceed to Mu'tamid to attest this. All agreed to this and declared themselves ready except me; I remained quiet and sat still. Muwaffaq asked me whether I had anything to say. I said: If the prince Nā*s*ir (whom God exalt) permit, I will speak.—He told me to do so. Prince, I said, you are sending us to a sovereign who may possibly ask us to attest something other than what you want us to attest; and when we are standing in his presence it will not be permissible for us to attest anything but that for which he demands our attestation. What then are your instructions?—Now I, so to speak, roused him from sleep by showing him that if the Caliph demanded our attestation of the confirmation of Mufawwi*d* and his own deposition and defamation, this would have to take place. He accordingly invoked a blessing upon me and abandoned the idea of sending us. After that he made of me an intimate associate and frequently summoned me, and this was how I commenced to be a man of importance in my town and to take the first place therein.

I was told by Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn al-Azraq Tanūkhī after one of his friends the following: Abū 'Alī Ibn Muqlah said that he had been a clerk in the service of Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn al-Furāt before the first vizierate of the latter. When he had been appointed vizier and been installed in office, he (he said) summoned me and bade me fetch Ibn al-Ukhmush and other traders and offer them thirty thousand *kurr* of the produce of the *Sawād*. Arrange the price with them, he said, only demand a payment of two dinars pre-emption money on each *kurr*; demand the immediate payment of that pre-emption money and when you have got it let me know. I fetched them, arranged the price, and demanded the pre-

emption money immediately; they offered to furnish it within three days, and when I communicated this offer to the vizier he accepted it, and told me when I had received the pre-emption money, to write a letter for them to the province, ordering the grain to be supplied and the money to be received. On the third day they brought the pre-emption money and I wrote the letter ordering the delivery. Some fresh business distracted me from informing the vizier, and only after two days did I tell him that I was in possession of the pre-emption money and (**169**) had been for some days, and asked for the vizier's instructions about it. He said Good heavens, you seem to have supposed that I meant to keep that money for myself, showing that you have a poor opinion of my character. I meant therewith to put your fortune on a sound basis, and to lay you under an obligation which should serve as a memorial of our association while securing your welfare.—I kissed his hand in gratitude, and when I returned to my house could not contain myself for joy. And when I realized the possession of this fortune, I began to aspire to the vizierate, and determined to fit myself for it and strive to acquire it. From that time I continued to aim thereat until at last my aspiration was realized.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh that he was in the company of Abu 'Alī Ibn Muqlah when there were rumours of his first vizierate. One of the Dīnārī[1] sheikhs entered the room, a man whom Abū 'Alī respected and to whom he then showed reverence. They sat for a long time in consultation and then their voices grew louder so that I could hear the sheikh remonstrating with him for aspiring to the vizierate, and endeavouring to dissuade him from undertaking it. Abū 'Alī remained silent and when the sheikh had finished his discourse, said to him: I am told that Mu'āwiyah whose acquaintance with the world is indisputable said that whoever

[1] Probably followers of the ascetic Malik b. Dinar.

seeks what is great must risk what is great.—The sheikh then said: "I commend the vizier to God," and withdrew. A week or less passed and Abū 'Alī was decorated and appointed vizier.

I was told by Abu'l-Fa*d*l Mohammed b. 'Abdallāh as follows: I was in Sīrāf when Abu 'Abdallāh al-Barīdī passed that way on his road to 'Alī b. Buwaihi. He was treated with honour by Laith who gave him a mount while the notables of Sīrāf came out to meet him at the head of the army and the whole population. I was among them and heard him say as he rode his horse: Whoso seeks what is great risks what is great.—A fine couplet was recited to me by Mutanabbi out of a famous ode by him:

> (**170**) A stranger and friendless in quest of a prize;
> Help varies inversely for such with the size.

I was told by Abu'l-*H*usain 'Abdallāh b. A*h*mad b. 'Ayyāsh as follows. When Abu'l-Qāsim Sulaimān b. *H*asan b. Makhlad was appointed vizier, in place of Abū 'Alī Ibn Muqlah, and the former with Abu'l-'Abbās al-Kha*s*ībī got him into their power in return for the sum which they had undertaken to make him disgorge, I used regularly to visit Abu'l-Qāsim in my character of attendant, and to see Abu'l-'Abbās in his company talking to him on the subject of Abū 'Alī and urging him to violent means of enforcing the demands upon him. Sometimes he was fetched in order to be tortured, in which case I would rise in order that he might not see me while he was being belaboured. When the torture became very painful he would say that he possessed such and such a sum in such and such a place. The torture would then be stopped and they would go to the place but find no truth in what he had said. And when he explained that he possessed neither fortune nor estate, but had sought immediate relief and to avert death, Abu'l-Qāsim Sulaimān could not for some days renew the torture, whence his affair lasted long and nothing was

extracted. A dispute in consequence arose between him (Sulaimān) and Abu'l-'Abbās, who maintained that the torture should not be spared, in order that by its means he might be made to deliver the money, whereas Sulaimān felt ashamed to take this course. Finally they agreed to transfer him to the residence of Abu'l-*H*ārith, whither Khas*ī*bī used to come to extract money from him by torture. One day I happened to have come to pay my respects to Abu'l-*H*ārith, and we were going to sit down and converse when Khas*ī*bī entered ; I retired into another chamber in order that he might not see me ; when they were by themselves they produced Ibn Muqlah, and Khas*ī*bī began to taunt him and reproach him for his conduct towards himself and Sulaimān, and obtain satisfaction by addressing to him the coarsest abuse. Placing him between two slaves with another behind, he said to him among other things : I was shown by Ya'qūb Barīdī your reply to him when you returned from the sea, written on the back of my letter to you, wherein you told him that he had obeyed your orders when he banished me to Yemen ; **(171)** to this you set your own hand, which may God cut off ! Why do not you bring the money and hand it over ? Did you want my eyes to be closed so that your words might be closed too ? Cuff him, slave !—He was cuffed and made to sign a promise to pay.

Of singular stories is one told me by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Yūsuf b. al-Azraq, as follows : We were visited in Anbār by a man from Qasr called 'Umar, who preached to the people and told stories of a devotional character, saying that if a man obeyed God, all things would obey him, so that he could plunge his hand into boiling oil and suffer no hurt. The people of the place were seduced by these assertions and assembled in the mosque to witness the performance. They asked me to be present, and I came accompanied by my brothers and the magistrate of the place. In the court of the mosque there was a

trivet set upon a bench, and above this a cauldron was placed, by which the man stood and prayed. When we entered they asked for some oil, and I sent my slave to fetch a gallon can which was poured into the cauldron, round which a great fire was lighted. When the oil was boiling seriously, the man accosted my brother and said : Abū A*h*mad, I warn you that if what you have produced be anything other than oil, I shall die.—When he said this, it was clear to me that it was a trick, but I assured him that it was nothing but oil.—Divesting himself of his attire he took the remains of the oil in the can, about a *ratl* in amount, and poured them into the cauldron ; then called for a ewer, carefully washed his hands, arms and chest, then taking a handful of the cold water sprinkled it upon the oil, which hissed all the more, then mounted the bench with cymbals in his hands which he tossed into the cauldron, then he very quickly introduced his hand, shouting at the top of his voice *There is no god but Allah.* He then plunged in his hand and took out the cymbals, which he flung down with violence, crying out at the top of his voice *O Allah, O Allah.* **(172)** Then he approached the oil, and baled some out with his hand, and washed therewith his chest and arms, shouting loud so as to lead the spectators to suppose that he was praying, though in my opinion he was howling with pain. Then he descended and commenced praying and said to the people : I hope after some days to bring you the lions of the forest led by their ears.—We took him home with us, where he washed in warm water, rubbed himself, and was fumigated, and he remained with us the rest of the day. When we asked him to explain his procedure, he would only say : Whoso obeys God is obeyed by everything.—So we asked him no more ; but after a few days a number of the people of Anbār came to us telling us that they had been boiling oil and been able to do what he had done, and similarly they could boil pitch and take it hot out of the pot with their hands. We confronted

him with them, and when they did it, he was nonplussed and said: This must be a blessing which I have brought you.—The next day he fled from the place. When we asked the persons who had done the trick, they replied that they had tried it themselves and found that some could endure the heat, just as some one man can endure extremely hot water in his bath whereas another cannot.

Similar to this is what was told me by Abū A*h*mad b. Abī Salamah one of the Witnesses in 'Askar Mukram. He had seen a man introduce his hand into a kettle of hot sugar and distribute the contents into vessels. Abu'l-*T*ayyib told me that he had seen the *S*ūfī Shiblī introduce his hand into a hot cauldron containing boiling hot flummery, take out some morsels and eat them. This, he said, was the best exploit of the sort which I have witnessed. He did it several times; on one occasion another *S*ūfī who was present said to him: Grant that your hand is like an anvil, is your throat cemented?

This Shiblī used to pull out the hair of his head, and there are wonderful stories about him. One is what I heard told by (**173**) Abū Mohammed Muhallabī. One day, he said, as I was passing through one of the streets of Baghdad, I saw a crowd collected round a prostrate man, and asked what was the matter. They told me that Shiblī had just passed by a vendor of gruel, whose crier had been calling out: How long will you be deceived?—This had so touched Shiblī that he had shrieked till he fainted. I went on wondering at his silliness, and seeing a *S*ūfī told him the story and asked him what there was in that to make Shiblī shriek with pain. He said: He believes that God is speaking to him through the mouth of the crier.—I said this is curious. Suppose another gruel-vendor had a crier opposite this one, also crying: How long will you be deceived? Which of the two would be the word of God?—That, he said, Shiblī must answer.

Among singular stories also is one told me by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh. Abu'l-*T*ayyib Ibn Abī Ja'far the *T*a'ite with Abu'l-Qāsim Sulaimān b. *H*asan and his son Abū Mohammed gave an entertainment, whereon he spent two hundred dinars, and displayed in the way of plate, wealth and luxury everything that was fair or rare or choice. The finest thing we saw was a pair of festal candles weighing thirty or forty *mann*, in two vast candlesticks erected in the centre of the room, with small candles distributed around them. When the attendants wanted to snuff them they had to stretch themselves to their full height. The colour of these candles was not agreeable, being a sort of white with a sprinkling of mould. We sat till near morning and the candles kept burning during the winter night ; we fell asleep and still they were burning, and the amount that had been consumed of each was a few inches ; otherwise they were unaltered. I could not refrain from asking him in private how that was. He replied that the candles had been in his possession and his father's for (**174**) fifty years, and had never been used ; he added that they had a great deal of wax like that, which they had kept till it aged, it having been told his father that if wax were kept some decades of years and were then used, only this amount of it would burn. He in consequence kept quantities of wax, and forgot about it till he died, and I, he said, after his death had other things to think of than to use it ; only when I got up this entertainment, I recollected the old wax in our stores, and brought out these two candles, with the effect which you have seen ; so that our experiment has been successful.

I was told by Abu'l-Faraj of Ispahan the following after Abu Bakr Yamūt b. al-Muzarri'. I heard, he said, Abu 'Uthmān al-Jā*h*iz recount how he had seen a cupper in Kufah practise his trade on credit till the next life, so firmly did he believe therein.

The same person told me as follows : I heard, he said, a man in the Qaṭī'ah utter the call to prayer thus : *God is greater ; I testify that there is no god but Allāh, I testify that Mohammed is the prophet of Allāh ; I testify that 'Alī is the friend of Allāh ; Mohammed and 'Alī are the best of mankind ; whoso refuses is an unbeliever ; whoso accepts is grateful ; may Hind —— on the son of 'Umar. Come to prayer, come to prosperity, come to the best of deeds. God is greater, God is greater, there is no god but Allāh.* This is an extravagant call,[1] and we ask God's forgiveness for repeating it, and beg His deliverance from ignorance.

I was told by a number of people of Baghdad that the *H*anbalites built a Mosque of Dissent, and made it a hot-bed of sedition and trouble. Complaint being made of this to 'Alī b. 'Īsā, he wrote on the back of the petition : *The building which best deserves to be demolished and to be razed is one planned and founded on impiety towards God. So let it be levelled to its base, please God.* (Cf. Qur'an ix. 110.)

I was told by my father the following story narrated by Abū 'Abdallāh al-Mufajji'. I had recited, he said, to Abū Mohammed Qāsim b. Mohammed of Karkh a long eulogy which I had composed about him, and when I had finished out came his son Abū 'Abdallāh Ja'far b. Qāsim (**175**) from some canvas, which was in the front part of the room in which we were, and said : Sir, are you not ashamed to eulogize us with a poem which is not yours, though you claim it ?—I was not then aware of his talent of rapidly committing things to memory, and protested that no one had ever said those words but me. Nonsense, he replied, I was taught it by the master at school so and so many years ago, and he began to recite it and went through the whole without missing a single verse, though there were more than fifty. I was in a terrible state of shame and was offering to divorce

[1] *i.e.* as indicating fanatical Shi'ism.

my wives and free my slaves if it were not mine; I not knowing how I had been deceived. At last Qāsim took pity on me and said: My friend, do not be worried, I know that you are speaking the truth, only my son never hears anything recited, long or short, but he can remember it straight off. When you recited your poem to us he retained it in his memory.—He gave me a present and I departed.

I was told by my father that a register was made by Ja'far b. Qāsim containing the revenue of Fars (or a district of Fars; the doubt is mine), the sheikhs of the district and its industries, its land-tax, how much had been paid and how much was in arrear, the revenue of the region and its outgoings, and that he was in the habit of sending in the balance-sheet to the vizier. The register when sought was missing, but Abū 'Abdallāh told them they need not trouble, and straightway recited it from memory in the presence of the vizier, making up the balance-sheet according to it. Presently the missing register was found, and when that which he had recited from memory was compared therewith it was found to agree with it literally, except in one section, where there was a transposition.

I was told by Abu'l-Qāsim 'Abdallāh b. Mohammed b. 'Ainūyah the clerk the following story which had been narrated to him by Kirmānī, a clerk who had been in the employ of Abu Bakr Ibn al-Sairafī, paymaster of the army. **(176)** I was sent, he said, by my master to make a distribution among some men under the command of Abū Mohammed Ja'far b. Mohammed b. Warqā, and having made the distribution I, with the clerk of Abū Mohammed, the collector, and the sergeant, found we had a surplus of about ten thousand dirhems. They said: Let us enter some place where we can calculate and divide. So we entered a Mosque opposite the residence of Abū Mohammed, where we saw no-one but an invalid lying asleep. He seemed to be a beggar, so we

thought nothing of him and commenced calculating. From one man so much, as forfeited pay ; so much, for a substitute ; so, much for the exchange of money ; so much, for difference in weight. Thus we arrived at the amount of the surplus and how much belonged by right to each of us. We proceeded to pay out. At this point the invalid raised his head, and said : Mates, produce a share for me.—Who are you, we asked.—One of the Moslems, he replied, who has heard what you are about.—We said : He is a weakling, give him five dirhems.—But he said : No, I want my fair share, as much as one of you gets.—We did not take him seriously, but he said : Look out, either you give me what I ask, or I shall at once take my seat in a boat, and proceed to Abū Bakr *S*airafī and inform him that you have taken so much in the name of so-and-so the substitute—repeating all that we had said and the whole calculation without losing a word. The least that he will do, supposing that he does not dismiss and punish you, will be to make you disgorge what you have stolen.—We considered what he was saying and found it to be correct, and requested him to be satisfied with part of what he was demanding ; but he vowed that he would take no less than the share of each one of us. We found ourselves in the necessity of complying with his demand, gave him a share equal to our own, and so parted.

I was told by my father that he when he was fifteen years old heard his father recite part of Di'bil's lengthy poem wherein he boasts of Yemen and recounts their achievements which he sets against the achievements of Nizār whereof **(177)** Kumait boasts ; the first couplet runs

> A respite from reproaches, migrant dame !
> The lapse of forty years leaves naught to blame.

The whole consists of six hundred couplets. Being anxious to learn it by heart owing to the account which it contains of the glories of Yemen and of my ancestors, I asked him to let me have the poem that I might commit

it to memory. He put me off and when I importuned him, he said : I fancy I see you taking the poem, learning some fifty or a hundred lines, and then throwing the book down and rendering it unfit for me to use.—I said : Please let me have it.—He then produced it and handed it to me, but his words had affected me ; so I entered a chamber in his house which was assigned to me, and shut myself in and devoted myself that day and the following night to the task of committing it to memory ; by the morning I had finished and knew it accurately. Paying him my usual morning visit I sat down in front of him, and he asked me how much of the poem I had learned. The whole, I replied. Supposing that I was lying, he angrily asked me to produce it. I drew the book out of my pocket ; he took it, and opened it, and then looked at it as I recited until I had gone through more than a hundred lines. He then turned over a number of leaves and said : Now recite from here.—I recited about a hundred verses from the end. He was astounded at the power of memory which I had displayed, embraced me and kissed me on the head and eyes, and bade me tell no one about it, for, he said, I am afraid of the evil eye.

I was told by my father that partly by his father's wishes and partly of his own initiative he had committed to memory two hundred poems by Abū Tammām and Bu*h*turī in addition to odes by other modern and ancient bards. My father and our teachers in Syria used to say that a man who knew forty poems by those bards of *T*ay, and could not compose himself, was an ass in human skin. I, he said, began to compose poetry before I was twenty years of age, (**178**) and then commenced the composition of my *maqsūrah* which begins

> Reason's restraint I'd spurn had not the goal
> Been reached ; who grasps the sword, *he* has the whole.

I was informed by Abu 'Abdallāh Ibn Hārūn Tustarī, Qur'ān-teacher, who had come to stay in our mosque in

Basrah, as follows : For many years, he said, I had been trying to commit the Qur'ān to memory, but when I had got to a certain place, I forgot what preceded as entirely as if I had never heard it. This distressed me to such an extent that I went on pilgrimage and, hanging on the curtains of the Ka'bah, I begged and implored God to aid me to commit it to memory. When I returned to Basrah I resumed my study and committed the whole to memory in six months according to the text of Abū 'Amr ; then I began to study the seven texts, and before a year was passed I had mastered most of them.

I heard the following maxims ascribed to one of the *S*ūfīs : Penitence is the soap for transgression : Thanksgiving to God is the ticket for maintenance : Prayer is the digestive for the stomach : Fasting is the astringent for the body : Faith is the capital.

Sayings ascribed to *S*ūfīs of our own time are : Knowledge of God is a guide with whom there is no straying : Good works are a provision which renders the longest journey safe.

I was told by Abu Mohammed Ya*h*yā b. Mohammed after Abū Is*h*āq Mohammed b. A*h*mad Qarārī*t*ī the following story that had been told the latter by Nāsir al-daulah Abū Mohammed *H*asan b. 'Abdallāh b. *H*amdān. My father, Abu'l-Haijā, he said, had a strong dislike towards me when first I came into the world, owing to the talents that he perceived me to possess and his fears for his offices ; he used to slight, detract from and stint me—treatment to which I resigned myself. Presently he was made governor of the Khorasan road, and when he inspected his horses, set apart some fifty that were diseased or lean. Then he said to me : *H*asan, I am to start to my province in two months' time, and I am handing these horses over to you, (**179**) to be committed to your care ; in order that I may thereby test your competence to handle important business. If you look after them so that they are cured and become sound

and plump, and you show competence for this task, I shall think you fit for what is more serious; but if they do not prosper under your care, then this will be both the first and the last task entrusted to you by me.—I thought it strange that the first task of which I was thought worthy was the grooming of horses, but saw nothing for it but to resign myself, and so signified assent. Taking the horses I installed them in a special stable, where I placed a bench for myself; I engaged grooms to whom I paid regular wages, and of whom I demanded the most faithful service; I myself inspecting the horses several times a day, to see that they were fattened, tended, and their hoofs greased, having secured the services of first class veterinary surgeons for the purpose. A little more than a month passed and they were sound, plump, and in prime condition. When the time of his departure approached, he said to me: *H*asan, what have you done with those horses?—I told him to come to the stable and see. He came; and, finding them in prime condition, was exceedingly pleased and praised me. Then he said: *H*asan, in return for your success in this affair I am going to tell you something which will be useful to you, and be a complete set-off for the trouble which I have given you. —I asked him to explain. He said: When you see one of your family promoted by the Sultan or favoured by fortune, do not be envious, or try to oppose, for you will only vex yourself to no purpose, injuring yourself without hurting him, and paining yourself without paining him; further you will be lowering yourself by endeavouring to lower one of your own family who has attained greatness. He can only have attained to it by an instrument which he can employ for your exaltation, or good fortune which will protect him against you. Do your best to serve him and to be loyal to him, that the advantages which he has secured may be yours also, and that his glory may redound on you; that you may enjoy his praise and commendation and be one of his helpers;

for this is better than that you should be the helper of one who is not (**180**) related to you. People finding you high in his favour will respect you, and if he has a post in the government, possibly you may get it yourself through his making you his deputy, or through his being promoted to something higher. And the same will be the case if the post is not in the government. Do not say that you are of an elder branch in the family and are his most distinguished relation, and that only yesterday he was low down as compared with us ; for men go with their times.—I accepted his advice, and he then proceeded to speak kindly to me, my attention to the horses having aroused some respect for me in his mind, and he bade me accompany him to his province. So I departed with him and accompanied him to the Bridge of Nahrawān, conversing with him ; and this familiarity emboldened me to ask a favour. Recollecting at the Bridge of Nahrawān that he had in the neighbourhood of Mausil a magnificent estate called Nahrawān, which I coveted, I said to him : Sir, my expenses and the charges upon me are increased many times, and if you would bestow on me your estate Nahrawān that I might employ its revenues in your service, that would not be improper.—When he heard this, he flew into a passion and began to abuse me in the vilest language ; Hound, he said, do you aspire to be the possessor of Nahrawān ?—Thus saying he came down upon me with the whip which he held in his hand and which was coiled like a scourge. It fell upon my cheek which it rent from top to bottom. I felt a fire kindled in my face, and as the blow was quite unexpected, I felt not only acute pain but anger at my treatment, which was even acuter than the pain. I said to myself : This was not the answer which I deserved, and it would have been sufficient had he refused ; evidently he still has a grudge against me.—So I fell back until my servants had come up and they stopped with me for a time until I had recovered a little, while he went

on ; I then turned my horse's head, and sent some one to bring back two mules which I had in the train, which carried my furniture, clothes and slaves, and returned (**181**) in the direction of Baghdad, being ill with pain and anger. I reached Baghdad, where the vizier at the time was 'Alī b. 'Īsā, who was greatly interested in my father, and had indeed given him his appointment ; he was also fond of me and showed me respect and special favour. I thought I would visit him and complain of my father's treatment, showing him the traces of the blow. So I went to our house and stowed away the mules and the luggage and then without alighting betook myself to the vizier's palace. As I dismounted and entered the court, I recollected my father's counsel on the subject of relations, and regretted having entered the vizier's palace, thinking to myself that the advice was better worth accepting in the case of a father than in that of any other relation. So I made up my mind to deceive the vizier and say nothing about it. So I entered and saluted him and stood before him, it not being my custom to sit down in his presence ; and when he saw me he was aghast at the weal on my face, and said : What *has* happened to you ?—He disliked the look of it and indeed it was exceedingly ugly. I replied that I had been playing polo and the ball owing to a miss had hit my face. Then he said : I thought you had gone away with your father ; why have you returned ?—I escorted him part of the way, I replied, and when he had got some distance returned to place myself at the disposal of the vizier.—He was proceeding to ask me about my father's journey, when my father himself appeared ; for after I had turned back, he was informed that I had done so, and in a fit of wrath decided to turn back also, either to fetch me or to put me under arrest. Coming to his house he learned that I had not dismounted, and had directed myself to the palace of the vizier. He had no doubt that I had gone thither for the purpose of accusing him. When he

entered and found me talking to the vizier, he was confirmed in that belief. When he had taken a seat, the vizier asked him what had recalled him. He said in answer : Vizier, is this the reward of my service, my loyalty and my devotion ?—And he began to recriminate vehemently, while I stood and listened in silence. The vizier said : Of what are you complaining, what have I done ?—He said : You have been permitting this hound to attack me and slander me in your presence.—(**182**) Whom do you mean ? asked the vizier.—This *H*asan, he said, who is standing here, God confound him.—My friend, said the vizier, you must be mad, and how did this begin ? I assure you this lad has uttered nothing about you, nor have I heard him say anything about you that deserved any remonstrance. How then do I deserve any for permitting him ? Had he done this, he would have lowered himself in my eyes.—My father, perceiving that I had said nothing to the vizier, was ashamed and kept silence. The vizier then said : You must really tell me what there is between you. You cannot have induced yourself to come back except for some grave reason. Now I notice that *H*asan has on him an ugly mark, and when I asked him, he said that a ball had gone wrong when launched by one of the lads with whom he was playing polo, and hit him in the face. I supposed him to be speaking the truth, but now that you have come, under the impression that he was charging you, I have an idea that it must be your work, and you must really tell me the truth.—Abu'l-Haijā then told him the story as it had occurred, and 'Alī b. 'Īsā came down upon him, saying : Are you not ashamed, Abu'l-Haijā, that this should be the degree of gentleness which you use with your son, and eldest child ? If you are so hasty with him, what will you be like with a stranger ? What harm was there in his asking you to give him an estate ? Had you done it, it would have been no extraordinary thing for a father to do to a son.

But if you were unwilling to do it, you should have refused him gently, or even roughly, if you were out of humour ; but as for going so far as to use the horse-whip, Oh fie !—He went on remonstrating and upbraiding, while my father hung down his head ashamed. Then he said : And more wonderful than all is your returning from your province in your anger against him, and supposing that he was accusing you before me, and that I permitted him to defame you, whence you come to remonstrate with me for an imaginary fault.—My father began to excuse himself, but the vizier said : I shall certainly not accept your excuse nor let the traces of the affair be obliterated from my memory unless you before witnesses present that estate to *H*asan as compensation for **(183)** the injury which you have wrought him. Then 'Alī b. 'Īsā said to me : Bend over your father's head and hand and kiss them.—I did so, and then 'Alī b. 'Īsā drew towards him an inkstand and a scroll and gave them my father, telling him to write out the deed assigning the estate to me, which was presently to be attested. He did so, and then the vizier bade me take it, and added : When he returns home, then draw up a formal deed and get it attested by a number of authorized witnesses ; and if he refuses, inform me, so that I may demand that he do it.—We left the palace thus reconciled, and when we were in the vestibule, my father said to me : *H*asan, I have been giving you those instructions for use against myself. I gather that you came here for the purpose of complaining of me, and when you got into the vestibule recollected my advice, and bethought yourself that those instructions could not be better employed than in the case of your father ; hence when you were in the presence of the vizier instead of making a complaint, you told him the story you had made up.—Sir, I said, that was assuredly so.—Then he said : If you have sufficient wisdom to recollect my instructions at such a time, you shall have henceforth nothing to complain of in my con-

duct.—I kissed his hand and returned home with him, where he in the presence of witnesses assigned the estate to me. He was better disposed towards me after that, and our relations became cordial. My accepting his counsel was a most fortunate thing for me.

I was informed by Sa'd b. 'Abd al-Ra*h*mān of Ispahan, secretary of prince Abu *H*arb Sanad al-daulah *H*abashī, son of Mu'izz al-daulah, whose nobility, worth, trustworthiness, taste and learning are well known, as follows: Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn Abi'l-Baghl, he said was governor of our land, and the following was told me by some one who was present in his audience-chamber at the time. There entered a sheikh bringing letters from Baghdad from the vizier of the time and various magnates of the metropolis, as well as friends of Abu'l-*H*usain there, telling him of the harm and good this sheikh could do. After saluting, the sheikh took a seat, and delivered his letters, but met with a chilling reception, for it was a big packet, too big in the opinion of Ibn Abi'l-Baghl, who declined to read them all, and when the bearer requested him to peruse them all, protested indignantly, and said: Are they not all to the same effect? You really are an affliction upon us, you iniquitous people; every day one of you comes to us demanding a situation; if the treasures of the whole world were at my disposal, they would by this time be exhausted.—Then he said to the man: My friend, I have no post for you, nor even an hour's job that I can give you; nor have I any surplus cash which I can give you in charity to the amount of *this*.—The man sat quiet until Ibn Abi'l-Baghl had stopped, and when he was silent, after a little he rose, and said: May God give you a good reward, and bestow on you a fair recompense on my account, and do you good and favour you—lavishing his thanks and prayers and eulogies in the most flattering terms. He then turned to go. Ibn Abi'l-Baghl told them to bring him back, and then said to him: My friend, you are mocking me; why should

you thank me ? For giving you no hope of employment, or holding out no prospect of a gratuity, or for my churlishly refusing you both ? Or do you mean to cajole me by this conduct ?—The man said No : I did not mean to cajole you, and your churlish refusal was unobjectionable, for you are the chief magistrate and tired out, and very likely the facts are as you say with regard to the number of applicants, and you are wearied to death with those who present themselves ; it is my misfortune that this churlish refusal and definite rejection have taken place in my case ; but I thanked you for a good reason, which is that you told me the truth about my chances with you at our first meeting, and so have saved me from the humiliation of false hopes and relieved me from the trouble of waiting on you morning and evening, and paying court to people who might intercede with you on my behalf. You have shown me how I must conduct my affairs, while the remainder of my journey-money is intact, the most valuable item in which is the complaisance which I must exhibit somewhere else. It was for this that I thanked you, and I excuse your treatment of me for the reason that I stated before. —Ibn Abi'l-Baghl hung down his head for shame, and after a time (**185**) when the man had gone, raised it, and told them to fetch the man back. When this was done, he apologised to him, and ordering a present to be given him, told him to take it until he could find him a suitable post ; for, he said, I find you are worthy to be favoured. After some days he appointed him to an important post and the man's fortune was made.

I was told by Abu'l-Qāsim as follows : This Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn Abi'l-Baghl was exceedingly fastidious. One day a despatch came to him from a deputy governor at a distance of many miles, which was done up with a tough tab ; Abu'l-*H*usain tried hard to break it with his hand, but found no means of doing so. Leaving the despatch aside, he ordered the governor to be summoned.

The day passed and after some days the governor presented himself. When he had taken his seat before his chief, the latter asked the keeper of the inkstand where was the letter that had come with the tough tab. When it was produced, he requested him to break the tab, which he attempted to do, but finding no means, borrowed a knife from the inkhorn of one of the clerks present and cut it. Ibn Abi'l-Baghl then said to him: Return now to your province: I have only summoned you to break this tab, and in order that I might inform you that any time that you do up a despatch with a tab of this sort I shall summon you to break it. He dismissed him forthwith to his province, not letting him stay an hour, nor asking him any questions about his affairs.

In the year 356 (began Dec. 17, 966 A.D.) the qā*d*īship of Basrah was filled by a man who was not in the opinion of the people the equal of the man whom he had displaced, who was Abu'l-*H*asan Mohammed b. 'Abd al-Wā*h*id Hāshimī, and the following verses were composed about him by Abu'l-Qāsim Bishr of Āmid, clerk of the two qā*d*īs Abu'l-Qāsim Ja'far and Abu'l-*H*asan Mohammed:

I beheld a judge's hood on the top of a head call for help, crying take me! It was in trouble, swaying now to the left, now to the right. (186) I asked what had befallen her, and she replied with a plaintive voice: It has happened to me, that I am where I do not fit, and I am afraid people will see me, and laugh at me, in which case I shall be disgraced.—I said to her: It is an ailment which you know from those who disapprove of these doings: those who sigh when they see you and from whose frame groans issue: those who endure buffeting for God's sake withal cease and are vehement and soften not . . . thereupon this vexation left her and she acquiesced.

The following verses were recited to me by Abū Riyāsh A*h*mad Ibn Abī Hāshim Qaisi (well known as an authority on the language and as a poet), having been composed by him about Abū Mohammed Muhallabī,

whom he had eulogized, but whose remuneration had been delayed, so that he had repeatedly, as he told me, to make application for it :

There is a lass saying : You have been eulogizing the vizier, for whose gift every one waited. Yet what benefit have you got from this eulogy and these morning and evening calls ?—I said to her : a man knows not by what means his affairs will prosper. All I can do is to strive and struggle, but I cannot secure success.

I heard Abu Ya*h*yā Zakariyyā b. Mohammed b. Zakariyyā of Rāmhurmuz telling my father as follows : Abu'l-'Abbās 'Ubaidallāh b. Dīnār, he said, was a friend of mine and was resident with us in Rāmhurmuz ; being in pecuniary straits he stinted his family, who sent me certain bracelets, armlets, and anklets of gold, on which he wanted to borrow three hundred dinars, which I lent. After some months the Dailem came, desiring to conquer the country, and Bachkam went out against them ; the townspeople fled at the approach of the Dailem and we determined to fly (**187**) in the event of Bachkam being defeated ; very speedily Bachkam returned defeated, and the people began to fly precipitately. Abu'l-'Abbās commanded his womenfolk to come out, but they delayed on account of their jewellery, till at last he became impatient and said to them : What is the matter with you ? If you have found a friend, stop and tell me that I may fly by myself ; if you have got defensive armour, carry it with you ; otherwise the sword has overtaken us, so why this loitering, when we should be flying ? Do you want them to overtake us ?—Then they told him about the pawned ornaments and he wrote to me :
In the name of God etc.

The maidens are all of their jewels bereft ;
Not a necklet of gold, not a bracelet is left,

I felt ashamed and sent the ornaments which he took. He then went away with his ladies and we did the same, and the Dailem entered the place.

I was told by Abu Mohammed 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar

al-*H*arithī, on the authority of a professional connoisseur of stones with peculiar properties, who was of Khorasan, the following story. I passed, he said, by a pedlar in Egypt, and noticed that he had a stone with which I was acquainted, pretty to look at and weighing five drachms. He had put it in front of him among his goods. I was aware that it possessed the property of driving away flies, and had been on the look out for it for many years. When I saw it, I made a bid for it, and when he demanded five dirhems, I did not beat him down, but gave him the coins in good money. When they were in his possession and the stone in mine, he began to indulge in mirth at my expense, saying: How easily we can gull these asses who do not know what they give or what they take! I assure you I saw this pebble only a few days ago in the hands of a child, and gave him one sixth of a dirhem for it; and here has this fool been giving me five dirhems for it!—I turned back and said to him: I would have you (**188**) know that you are the fool, not I.—How so, he asked.—Come with me, I said, and I will show you.—So I made him come, and presently we came to a huckster who was selling dates out of a dish, and the flies were buzzing all about. Bidding the man stand at a little distance from the dish, I placed the stone upon it, and when it was there all the flies flew away and left it, and for a time there was not a single fly there. Presently I took the stone away and the flies returned; then I replaced the stone and the flies flew off. I did this three times, then I concealed the stone, and said: Fool, this is the flystone, in search of which I have come the whole way from Khorasan. Among us, kings place it on their tables, and the flies will not come near, whence no fans nor flyflaps are required. Had you asked five hundred dinars for it, I should have given them you. The man heaved a deep sigh, so deep that I thought his end had come; after a time he recovered, and we parted. After some days I went off to Khorasan, having in my posses-

sion the stone, which I sold to Nasr b. Ahmad the governor for ten thousand dirhems.

I was told by Abū 'Abdallāh Mohammed b. Ahmad b. Sa'īd of 'Askar Mukram the following story: There was in our town, he said, a sheikh of Ispahan who was well known as a dealer in gems, called Kāfūrī. He understood them well. He told me how he had once bought a couple of gems, sold to him by their owner as turquoise, but which he recognized as jacinth, a stone which resembles a red ruby. I bought them of him, he proceeded, for three hundred dirhems, and polished them skilfully, and they gave out a beautiful lustre. It happened that I journeyed to Oman with them in my possession, and there offered them as rubies to the governor, Yūsuf b. Wajīh. He described them to all the jewellers, and as they confirmed my statement, he after protracted (**189**) negotiations purchased them of me for fifty thousand dirhems. After I had received the price, some doubts entered his mind about them, and sending for me, he demanded his money back. I said to him: If you wish to take the money by *force majeure*, you are the governor, and I am unable to resist; but if you wish to recover it for sound reasons, then let the people of the trade decide between us.—He said there was no one in Oman in whose knowledge he put confidence. Then I said: Ceylon is close by and there are the mines. Send the stones there, and if the people there say they are not rubies, I will return the money.—My idea was to trade with the money until the fact came to light, and having made a profit, to return him the capital. He made me undertake to return the money on this condition and to stay in Oman, and sent off the stones. When a year or near it had passed, he sent for me, and produced letters to him from there, the writer of which stated that he had assembled all the people of the trade in Ceylon, and shown them the stones; they had declared them to be red rubies, only that they were soft; had they been harder, they would have been

priceless; but that they were not rubies of their mine. When I had read the letters, he said: Now return the money.—I said: I am under no obligation to do so; I never guaranteed, when I sold them, that they were from a mine in Ceylon or from any other, nor that they were either hard or soft. The people acquainted with that mine have certified that they are rubies, but have designated them as soft, stating that were it not for this flaw they would be priceless. And indeed were it not for that flaw, I would not have sold them to you for fifty thousand dinars. I am a tradesman visiting your country, and you ought not to do me an injury.—He asked the people present what they said. They declared themselves on my side, so he let me go.

I was told the following by al-*H*ārithī after some one who told him the story. I was travelling, he said, in a mountainous country, and had on me some dinars, about which I was anxious. So I got a hollow reed and put the dinars in one of the tubes,[1] which they filled so full that they neither jingled nor made any noise whatever. **(190)** On the top of this I poured molten lead, so that their existence was concealed and they were stuck to the reed. To it I attached a ring and a strap, and I leant upon it as I walked. In various places we were attacked by banditti and Kurds, who took everything that there was in the caravan, but I was not personally assailed, until finally we were attacked by some banditti on foot who stripped us, and one of them noticing my staff took a fancy to it, and appropriated it. I was in despair on account of the dinars, and the people of the caravan began to ridicule me, pointing out that there were those among them who had lost money and goods and yet displayed no such vexation as I was showing over the loss of a stick. I kept quiet, and said nothing about its contents. Our journey, he continued, went on

[1] In the Babylonian Talmud, *Nedarim* 25a a similar device is mentioned.

until I had reached my destination, where I remained isolated, and was compelled to do manual labour for about a year. Then passing by a pedlar on the road I observed in front of him a reed which resembled mine, and when I inspected it more closely I found that it was mine; the weight too was unchanged. Summoning up courage, I asked the pedlar if he would sell it me. He said he would. For how much? I asked.—Two dirhems, was the reply. That was precisely the sum which I happened to possess. So I said to myself I had better give them to him, relying on God Almighty; if my money be inside, then I shall be the gainer; whereas if not, then I shall have to make excuses to myself and no one else. So I gave him the two dirhems, and taking the stick went up to the mosque, borrowing an awl from a cobbler on the way. Taking this with me, I proceeded to cut the stick, and out dropped my very own dinars. Taking them and throwing away the stick, I praised God for having preserved them for me, went away, purchased an outfit, and travelled homewards with goods and a fortune.

I was told by Abū 'Alī *H*asan b. Mohammed, clerk of Anbār, the following: A certain man, he said, died among us at Anbār—he gave the name—who owned a large fortune, was very freehanded and possessed quantities of clothes; so many were there that each description required a number of boxes, *e.g.*, the *dabīqī* vests were separate (**191**) from the satin vests, and the same was the case with shirts, pantaloons, *jubbahs* and *tailasāns*. Now he had as heirs certain cousins, but there was also a "mother of children"[1] whom he had made his wife. After his death she removed all the furniture, chattels and clothes except a little from the house, and hid them; she only forgot the boxes which contained the pantaloons, and so did not take them away. The cousins came and sealed up the stores, and when the mourning was over,

[1] A slave-girl who acquired certain rights by maternity.

opened them and found them as empty " as the heart of Moses's mother " (*Sūrah* xxviii. 9). They brought an action against her before the local qā*d*ī, but it was indecisive, and they came to the metropolis to appeal. She was compelled to travel thither and was brought before the qā*d*ī Abū Ja'far Ibn Buhlūl, who had been appointed to consider the appeal. They presented themsleves before this judge, and he began questioning them about their charge which she denied *in toto*. They said to him, Qā*d*ī, with regard to the deceased, you know as well as any one about his splendour and his clothes, and what you used to see in his possession. All this was in her hands, and on the day of his death we sealed up his stores, she being in the house. When we opened them, the only belongings of his which we found were a number of boxes containing pantaloons and a few garments besides. Where have the rest gone ? Who has taken them ? And what is the reason of the quantity of pantaloons and the paucity of other garments ?—The woman came forward eagerly as one with an answer prepared, and said : God exalt the qā*d*ī, have you not heard the story recounted by Ja*h*iz, of a man who fell in love with mortars and collected two hundred of them ? This man was similarly enamoured of pantaloons.—The qā*d*ī Abu Ja'far laughed, and the court was dissolved without a verdict, nor could they get anything out of her after that.

Two men appeared before me in Ahwāz, one of whom claimed something from the other, who repudiated the claim. I asked him whether he would swear.[1] He replied : the man has no claim upon me, so why should I swear ? If he had any claim, I should have paid him the compliment of swearing.

(**192**) I heard the qā*d*ī Abu'l-Qāsim Ja'far b. 'Abd al-*W*āhid Hāshimi say : I was in the presence of the

[1] As the defendant should do, when the plaintiff brings no evidence.

qā*d*ī Abū 'Umar some time after he had accepted my testimony, unofficially, and we began to talk about musical instruments. I happened to say that So-and-so strikes the rebeck. Abu 'Umar called out : I say, you are mocking me, you are making game of me ! What do you mean ?—What is this, I said, God exalt the qā*d*ī ! I do not know that I said anything that has any connexion with what the qā*d*ī is saying.—He said : Your phrase *strikes* suggests that you do not know that the rebeck has to be *pulled* in order to make it sound, and is not struck.—I solemnly swore that I was not aware of that, having never seen the instrument. He said : That is a pity. The proper course for the virtuous man is to know the paths of evil in order that he may avoid them with understanding, not out of ignorance.—Returning home I asked a groom who was with me to fetch me a rebeck. He did so and pulled it before me, and I saw that Abū 'Umar had spoken correctly.

He added : Once Abū 'Umar was going down a street in which a wine cask had been smashed, when one of the Witnesses who was accompanying him uttered the interjections which are usually evoked by a foul smell. The qā*d*ī said nothing at the time, but when the man came to court to give the evidence which it was his duty to give, the qā*d*ī declined to receive it. The witness was in a terrible state, and got some one to find out the reason. The qā*d*ī replied: The man is either a liar or an ignoramus, and told the story of the wine. The fact, he said, that it is prohibited, does not make it stinking instead of fragrant, so as to give him any reason for exclaiming in that way. He uttered that exclamation, knowing well that the odour was fragrant ; he was therefore deceiving and lying, or else is ignorant to the extent which I suggest ; I shall not therefore receive his evidence.

I was told by Abū Mohammed Ya*h*ya b. Mohammed b. Fahd the following story which had been told him by a clerk.

The story which follows to the end of p. 199 *in the original is of some interest, but not quite suited for translation.*

(**200**) I have been informed by various people that Asad b. Jahwar the governor was a miserly man, yet of sufficient importance to be invested with high offices, and of great wealth. Once he wrote to his deputy in a district bidding him send him two hundred *jawānpīrah* "old young women." The deputy wondered what he meant to do with all these old dames, and how such a number could be got together out of a single village. However he collected as many women as he could, old and young, and sent them, whether they assented or not, with a letter to the effect that his orders had arrived bidding him collect two hundred *jawānpīrah*, that such a number could only be found in a big town or a number of villages, but that he had collected a certain number and sent them with the bearer of his missive. When he read the letter, he said: Hand them over to the cook, and tell him to kill a certain number, and dress a certain number. They asked him whether he really meant the women to be killed. He denied that he had sent for women. When they assured him that he had, he asked for the return of his letter. When it was brought him he said: I assuredly only meant *jawānmurg*, "young birds," though I wrote *jawānpīrah*. Give the women something and send them home, and write to him to send *jawānmurg*.—This was done. He was known to be very stingy with his food; his companions suffered severely from this quality of his. He used to summon them and order them to be seated, and have all sorts of delicacies brought in, but if one of them ventured to taste even a small morsel of any of these, he was prepared to shed his blood, and speedily inflicted punishment. It was their practice when the table was removed to wipe their hands on their beards to show that they had not feasted on anything which would make them greasy. He had a

nephew who was bold with him, did not regard him, and wounded his feelings when he ate at his table. One day a magnificent turkey was brought in, and when the nephew was about to fall upon it, the uncle seized his hand (**201**) with force, and said: You wretched, rude, unmannerly lout, could any one in the world approve of such a beauty being spoiled?—The nephew retorted: You scurvy miser, for what do you suppose it is fit? To be made into a rosette on the face of the inheritance for the benefit of your posterity, or a gem for the centre of a necklace to decorate the breast of the room, or a beauty to be gazed at? It is quite impossible, I swear, for me to keep my hands off it.—They wrangled for it for a time, and at last the young man said: Ransom it!—With what? asked the uncle. With your mule, said the other, naming a particular beast. I agree, said the uncle. You give the saddle and bridle in addition?—Agreed.—The nephew declined to remove his hand from the turkey until the ransom was produced. A slave was sent to fetch them, and when they were brought the young man handed them to his own slave, who took them away, while he himself let go the turkey. The meal was then finished, the table removed, and the uncle retired to sleep. The nephew then went to the cook and bade him bring at once the dainty morsel and all that had been removed from the table. When this was brought, he recalled the guests, who sat down and consumed the things. Thus besides feasting on the turkey and the other eatables he got the mule with its harness into the bargain.

The narrator adds that this person could only not endure to *see* the things eaten; when once they were removed from his presence, he made no further inquiry about them.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn al-Azraq on the authority of his father that the affair narrated happened to *H*asan b. Makhlad with his cousin. I saw this young

man, he said, coming to the Revenue Office on the mule of *H*asan b. Makhlad, and asking the reason, obtained this account.

I heard Abū 'Abdallāh Ibn Abī Mūsā Hāshimī say: I was in the presence of Nāsir al-daulah in Baghdad when he asked for something to eat in a hurry, so as to lose no time; they brought him a roast fowl, a loaf of bread, sugar, salt, vinegar, and a little in the way of vegetables. He began to eat while I entertained him, when the chamberlain entered to announce some people who, being respected by him, had to be received. **(202)** He ordered the fowl to be removed, wiped his hands, and let the visitors enter, with whom he talked. Presently they departed and he ordered the dish to be brought back. It was brought in, and after gazing for a time at the fowl, he angrily asked: Where is *that* fowl?—They said: Here it is.—He vowed by his father that it was not and told them to bring the cook. When the cook was fetched, he asked him whether it was the same fowl?—He was silent. Tell me the truth, he then insisted. The cook admitted that it was not. What then have you done with the other?—When it was removed, he said, we did not know that you would want it back; so one of the small lads took it and ate it. When you asked for it, we took this one, tore off a piece and pulled it about as you had done with the other, hoping that you would not notice, and brought it in.—Ass, said the prince, of that fowl I had torn off the right leg and eaten the left side of the breast, whereas of this one the right part of the breast is eaten, and the left leg torn off. Do not you do this sort of thing again.

I was told by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh the following story, told him by Ja*hz*ah: By a single meal to which I was invited, he said, I gained five hundred dinars, five hundred dirhems, and five handsome garments, with a splendid scent-box. I asked how that came about. He

replied: *H*asan[1] was miserly with food, liberal with money. He would offer his guests wine and food; if any one of them ate, he would doom him to death; but his favour would be secured by one who drank without eating. One day I was with him and he said to me: Abu'l-*H*asan, I have decided to have an early carouse to-morrow, so spend the night with me. I told him I could not do that, but, I said, I will come round early to-morrow before the time. On what are you going to breakfast?—He enumerated various things that had been prepared, and told me the orders which he had given his cook. We agreed then that I should pay him an early visit, and I went home, where I summoned my cook, and ordered him to prepare precisely the same and have it ready by night time. He did this (**203**). I went to bed and after midnight rose and ate what had been prepared, washed my hands, and had my horse saddled, and was about to start for his house when his messengers knocked at my door. When I came to him, he adjured me by his life to tell him whether I had eaten?—God forbid, I replied; I left you before sunset, and it is now midnight; when has there been time for food to be prepared or for me to eat it? Ask your servants in what state they found me.—They said: We found him, sir, just dressed, waiting for them to finish saddling his mule for him to ride.—He was exceedingly pleased at this, and then the food was brought in. I had no appetite left even to smell it, so I abstained from fingering it, out of necessity, though he kept inviting me to eat, while had I done so, he would have outlawed me, as was his practice. I repeatedly said to him: I *am* eating, sir; could any one in the world eat more than I am eating?—When the meal was finished, we sat over the wine, and I began to drink by the pint, to his evident satisfaction, he supposing that I was drinking on an empty stomach, or on the meal which I had sat out with

[1] *i.e.*, Ibn Makhlad.

him. Then he ordered me to sing, which I did; he listened with approval and pleasure and drank many pints. When I observed that the wine was affecting him, I said: Sir, you enjoy my singing, but what do I enjoy? —He thereupon ordered a slave to bring his inkstand, and when it was brought wrote a note which he flung to me, which was an order on his banker for five hundred dinars. Taking this with thanks I recommenced singing, and he being pleased thanked me still more; I asked him for some clothes, and he gave me five robes of honour. Then he ordered that his guests should be fumigated, and a magnificent box, containing a quantity of scent was produced; out of this the slaves began to fumigate the party, and when they had finished, I said: Sir, am I to be satisfied with mere fumigation?—He said: Then what do you want?—My share, I replied, of the box.—He said: I give it to you.—I took it, and he proceeded to drink another pint of wine, and then leaned back on his cushion, (**204**) as was his custom when intoxicated. The dawn had risen by this time and I rose with the others, as it was the time in which people went to their business. I left the house like a thief coming out of premises which he has been robbing, with the robes and the scent-box in a bundle on the neck of my slave. I went home, and after some sleep, rode to ʿAun-street, to call on the banker, and found him in his shop. When I presented the order, he asked if I was the person named therein. When I said Yes, he said: You know that people like myself do business for a profit?—I said Yes. Our practice, he went on, in such cases is to take a commission of one dirhem on every dinar. I told him I would make no difficulty about that. He then said: I did not mention this in order to make a large profit out of you; which do you prefer, to take your money on the ordinary terms, which I have explained, or to stay where you are till noon, when I shall have finished my business, and then ride home with me and spend the day and night drinking

with me ? I assure you I have heard about you, and have been anxious to hear you sing ; I have now got the opportunity of doing so cheap. If you do this, I will pay you full value for the dinars without deduction.—I said : I will stay with you.—So he put the order in his pocket, and proceeded with his business ; when midday prayer approached, his slave brought round a fine mule which he mounted, and we rode together to a magnificent house splendidly furnished and with expensive plate, with only Greek slave-girls as servants and no males. Leaving me in his *salon* he went to an inner apartment and presently came out from his bath-room in princely attire. He then fumigated himself and fumigated me personally with fine old *nadd ;* we then enjoyed a splendid and dainty meal, and for the wine proceeded to another splendid apartment, containing fruit and costly plate. We spent the night drinking, and the night passed more agreeably than the preceding one with *H*asan b. Makhlad. When morning broke, he produced two purses one containing dinars and the other dirhems, and weighed out five hundred dinars from the first, then he opened **(205)** the other which contained freshly minted dirhems, of which he also weighed out to me five hundred, saying : Sir, those I was ordered to pay, but these are a gift from me.—I took them and departed ; the banker became my friend, and his house my home.

* * * *

(206) I was told by Abu'l-Qāsim *S*arawī that there was in Baghdad a robber named Ibn 'Aishūnah, who once when there was trouble in the city met a man of learning. The robber having come out for the purpose of seizing the clothes of the passers-by, seized this man and bade him strip. When he told the robber his name, the latter felt shame. The man then said to the robber : Act according to the lines which I am going to recite to you. He said : Out with them. He then recited :

Some fifty thousand gallant scions,
Each equal to a thousand lions,
Their garments one day girt and tied,
Then loosed and dropped them as they died.

The robber said : That is very fine, let me have some more of your poetry. He said :

(**207**) He stirred up trouble when the quince he bit ;
Your love has in my heart its zenith hit.

The robber said : That is confused. Then he said : I am Ibn 'Aishūnah ; by the life of my mates, save yourself. —So the man went off, and the other left him.

I saw a comic cobbler at the *T*āq Gate, called al-Mudliq, and nicknamed the qā*d*ī, who used as a joke to give his sandals various names taken from different forms of blows, saying to his customers " this is a poller," " this is a header," " this is a naper." One of them asked him how much he had given for it. He replied : If it comes down on your throat, I will tell you the price, and take it from you ; but if it falls on your neck and you dislike it, I will take it from you for the money.

I also saw a physician amusing himself with a patient, who complained of some ailment. This shows, said the former, that the yellow bile is giving you trouble.—Now what the patient complained of was dampness, so he said : My friend, I am troubled with dampness, so how can it be the yellow bile which is giving trouble ?—Then the black bile, said the physician.—I do not know, said the patient.—My opinion, said the doctor, is that it is the tawny bile.—The man saw that he meant the two, the yellow and the black.—The physician then gave him a prescription.

I was told by Ab 'Abdallāh Ibn Warām the Kufic metaphysician that there was in Kufah an undutiful son, who once when his father remonstrated with him, dragged his father by the foot out of the house some way into the street ; when he had got to a certain point the

father said to him : (**208**) My son, this is enough ; for thus far did I once drag my father by the foot, to the point whither you have dragged me.[1]

I was told by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn Suhail the Shoemaker that one of the *S*ūfīs said : Sweet words extract the essence of gratitude.

The following verses were recited to me by Is*h*āq b. Ibrāhīm b. 'Alī of Nisibin, the Metaphysician, which were composed by him on his slave Sa'd :

God be gracious to him who named you Sa'd (felicity) ; he was truly most felicitous.
He must have seen Felicity conspicuous between your eyes ; and so he gave you that admirable name.
And if anyone calls you to do anything, you prove yourself therein the " Felicity of Felicities." [2]

I found among my father's papers a letter to him from Abū Mohammed Muhallabī, written some years before the latter had become vizier : it began : *My letter, God prolong the Qādī's life, leaves me in health, such as I hope may always be his companion and his own possession* :

And praise to the Lord by whose praise I'd secure
That his station be high and his glory endure :
And even if fate do not choose that we meet,
It grant me to hear of thee firm on thy feet.

I received your letter, God prolong your fortune, and rose up to do it honour, and sat down again fiilled with joy over it ;

Opening it I found it night
On a surface of pure light.
Like the neck of maiden fair
And her cheeks and locks of hair.
Of its words a pearly set
Like her teeth or collaret.
In my heart I made it rest
Like the heart within the breast.

[1] From Aristotle's *Ethics*.

[2] Name of a group of stars.

I heard (**209**) Abū *T*al*h*ah after a long chain of authorities record the saying: If a man wake on a Saturday morning and have by him '*Anbarī* salad and a greengrocer within reach, and does not breakfast, may God make his morning neither good nor healthy!

I was told by Abu'l-*H*usain A*h*mad b. Yūsuf and Ya'qūb b. Is*h*āq b. al-Buhlūl Tanūkhī that Abū *H*udhaifah Wā*s*il b. 'A*t*ā once started on a journey with some of his followers, when he was intercepted by a Khārijite army. Wā*s*il asked his followers to say nothing and let him deal with the Khārijites. They agreed; so he, followed by his comrades, went towards the troop, who, when he came near were about to attack him. He asked them why they thought it permissible to do so, before they knew who he and his friends were, and for what purpose they had come. They said: Well then, who are you?—He said a party of pagans who have come to implore your protection, that we may hear the word of God. They stayed their hands accordingly and one of them commenced reading the Qur'ān to them. When he had ceased, Wā*s*il said: We have heard the word of God, so now bring us to a safe place where we can consider it.—They agreed that this was their duty, and told him and his friends to march. So we marched, he said, accompanied by the Khawārij, who were defending us with their spears, for many leagues until we reached a town where they had no authority. They then said: Here you are safe.—Wā*s*il agreed, and requested them to withdraw, which they did. Abū *H*udhaifah was guided herein by the text of the Qur'an: (Sūrah ix. 6) *If one of the pagans demand your protection, then give it him that he may hear the word of God, then bring him to a safe place.*

The following was told me by Abu'l-*H*usain. Ismā'īl *S*affār of Basrah, he said, was one of the heads of our Mu'tazilite colleagues, and the people of that time were very severe against the "followers of the truth," and

used to avoid them (**210**) in the streets. One night a thunderbolt fell in the street wherein Ismā'īl was residing in Basrah; when morning came he told his slaves to sweep his doorway and put a couch for him there, since otherwise his opponents would spread rumours about him.[1] This was done and he sat at his door. One of the great sheikhs of Basrah, and an opponent of his passing by, said: Were we not told that God had struck you with a thunderbolt from Him?—Why, he asked: Do *I* say that I shall see God face to face (Qur'an iv. 152).[2]

One of the followers of this Ismā'il stated that the Qur'ān was "created[3]" in the presence of some of the mob of Basrah; they rushed upon him and brought him before Nizār *D*abbī, who was then governor of Basrah. The governor had the man imprisoned. Ismā'īl went the round of the Mu'tazils and collected more than a thousand men, and with them came next morning to the governor's door, demanding admission. When this was accorded, he said: God exalt the governor, we are told that you have imprisoned a man for saying that the Qur'ān is create; all of us who have come to you say the same, and behind us in this city there are many times our number who maintain the same. Either imprison us all with this colleague of ours, or let him go with us. The governor perceived that if he refused, the result would be a disturbance, of which the consequences could not be foreseen, and that gentle measures would be wisest. So he said: Rather I will release him, which he did; and they went away with him at a run.

I was told by Abū 'Alī *H*asan b. 'Abdallāh Īdajī the qā*d*ī, how when the sheikh Abū Hāshim Jubbā'ī died in Baghdad we gathered together to bury him, and bore him to the Khaizurān cemetery on a rainy day. Few people knew of his death. When our party was occupied with the ceremony another corpse was brought, and

[1] Doubtless that he had been struck.

[2] The Mu'tazils deny this.

[3] A Mu'tazil Shibboleth.

with it were a group whom I knew to be men of learning. I asked them whose it was; and they replied: Of Abū Bakr b. Duraid. I thought of (**211**) the story of Rashīd when Mohammed b. *H*asan and Kisā'ī were buried in Rayy on the same day.[1] This was in the year 323 (began Dec. 11, 934 A.D.), and I told our colleagues the story. We mourned long over theology and the Arabic language ere we parted.

I was informed by my father on the authority of the same with a chain of authorities which he produced, that a chief-clerk called Hubairī was out of employ and in consequence in distressed circumstances. He kept haunting the house of the man who at that time was acting as vizier, Ibn Abī Khālid the Squinting, and indeed so constantly that this person grew tired of him, and gave orders that he should not be admitted. Nevertheless he continued to present himself every morning, staying on his horse at the gate until the vizier came out, then waiting until his return, and only departing when the vizier came out, then waiting until his return, and only departing when the vizier had entered his house. Of this too the vizier grew weary, and he ordered one of his secretaries to meet the man and tell him that the vizier had no employment for him, and did not wish to see him always; so he was to go away and not approach his door. The secretary felt ashamed to deliver this message from his master to one who had been an eminent clerk, even though fortune had been against him, and was aware that this procedure of the vizier was dictated by personal distrust, dislike and disgust; so, he said, I went home, and took with me five thousand dirhems, and going to Hubairī said to him: The vizier (whom God exalt), greets you, and wishes you to know that it vexes him to see you at his door when his business prevents him from attending to you, and that for the present he

[1] Rashid said that grammar and law had been buried on that day.

has no employment which he would think suitable for you ; but he sends you five thousand dirhems which are to help you in your expenses, and you are to stay at home, and save yourself the trouble of coming to his house. If a suitable vacancy should occur he will send for you.—The sheikh was very wrathful, and he said : He treats me as a beggar and a mendicant, sending me a gift indeed! By Allah I shall not accept it.—I thought him a fool, and feeling indignant at his conduct, said : My friend, **(212)** I assure you that these dirhems are not from the vizier's purse but from mine, and his message was much more disagreeable than you think ; and I did not like to approach you with it, you being one of the leaders of our profession, and resigned myself to this pecuniary sacrifice without my master's knowledge, to shield you. He said : As for you, God give you good reward, albeit I have no need of your money, though I have to suck raindrops ; Only I adjure you by God to deliver the actual message. Thereby you will gain my gratitude.—So I delivered the message accurately and truly. He asked me to charge myself with the answer, and I agreed to do so. Say to him, he said, that I do not pay my visits to him personally, but only because he happens to have become the avenue to wage-earning in my case, since I am skilled in no other craft than that of clerk, and the posts of this service are all in his hands. A man can only approach a house through the gate, and if he is a candidate for employment, he must apply at the proper place. If God gives him a chance of obtaining it, he takes it ; if not, he will have done his best. His disgust with my importunity will not prevent my applying to him, and if God give me anything through or by him, I shall take it in his despite. If not, I can at least annoy him by the sight of me, just as he annoys me by keeping me idle.—I left him wondering, but did not repeat his message to the vizier, fearing he might be vexed. So I neglected the matter that day, and on the following

morning when the vizier issued from his residence accompanied by me, there was the sheikh as usual. When the vizier saw him, turning to me he asked whether I had not delivered his message. I said I had. Then why, he asked, has he returned ? I told him that it was a long and queer story, and that I would recount it to him when he was comfortably installed in his room. When he was seated in his boat he asked me to recount what had taken place. I thereupon told him the story, including my offer of the dirhems from my own purse, and everything else that had occurred, and I repeated the message to him verbally. He nearly burst with rage. By the time I had finished, the boat had arrived at the Caliph's palace, and the vizier entered the imperial presence with his mind still full of Hubairī and the indignation which his message had aroused. As he stood in the Caliph's presence, among other subjects the Caliph said to him : The governor of Egypt is remiss with the tribute and seems inclined to repudiate ; choose a strong man to be sent to inspect and to demand the arrears.—Now Ibn Abī Khālid was interested in an official named Zubairī, and wished to nominate him for this post. Only, having his mind full of Hubairī whose story was fresh in his memory with his personal grievance against him, he said *Hubairī*. The Caliph said : What, is Hubairī still living ? The vizier replied that he did not mean Hubairī, but So-and-so son of so-and-so *Z*ubairī. The Caliph said : You may possibly have meant *Z*ubairī, but tell me about Hubairī, who in my father's lifetime laid me and my friends under obligations. These I ought to discharge.—Yes, said the vizier, he is still alive.—Then said the Caliph, send him to Egypt. He is not suitable, your majesty, said the Vizier. Why ? asked the Caliph. —He is decrepit, said the vizier.—Bring him to me, said the Caliph, that I may see him myself ; if he is decrepit, I will give him a present and a pension, whereas if he is still equal to the work, I will send him. Your majesty,

said the vizier, he has been unemployed for years, and has become obscure and forgotten, whereas this business requires a man of distinction.—If we, said the Caliph, bestow our favour upon him and give him so important a commission, his fame will revive, and his renown will be renewed.—He has no means, urged the vizier.—We will make him a grant, said the Caliph, of a hundred thousand dirhems out of our privy purse, and send him mules, horses, tents and other equipment.—As the vizier continued to make objections, the Caliph said: I see that you are prejudiced against him, and you must tell me the truth about the relations between you.—When the vizier hesitated, the Caliph adjured him by his life to make a clean breast of the matter, which he proceeded to do. The Caliph then said: God has, as he said, brought about his fortune through you in your despite; I shall not budge until you have made out his deed of investiture and presented him with all that I have ordered. And then bring Hubairī to me.—So he was fetched, and Ibn Abī Khālid went out to him and said to him: My friend, God *has* brought about your fortune through me in my despite. (**214**) He then told him all that had taken place, handed over to him the rescripts with the presents promised by the Caliph, and letters to Egypt; whither after giving him his instructions he sent him.

I was told the following story also about this Ibn Abī Khālid. He was, said my informant, an odious person. One day an early visit was paid him by one of the chief clerks, named Ibn Abi'l-A*d*jam, who had long been out of employment, and took the opportunity of seeing him when he was seated in the morning in order to complain of his condition, and solicit a post. He had timed his visit very early. He was met with a harsh refusal, being asked by the vizier what was the important business that brought him at such an hour. The sheikh lost his temper, and said: I ought not to wonder at you, but at myself, for fixing my hopes on you, and keeping my

eyes open in expectation of the dawn in order to pay you an early visit, making my family and slaves deny themselves sleep, and then taking the trouble to rush in on you and lay my case before you, only to be met with this kind of reply. He then proceeded to invoke on himself all the curses mentioned in the oath of homage if he ever again darkened the vizier' sdoor, made of him any request, or solicited of him any employment, unless the vizier first came to his house and apologized for his reception of him and attended to his business in his (the applicant's) house. He then departed, but when he had reached home, he bitterly regretted what he had done. For, he said, this man is naturally mean, overbearing and cruel; I am compelled to apply to him for what I want. Why then did I take this oath? No-one is in a worse case than I am, for this vizier will certainly not trouble about me, or ever come to me, whereas I have no means now of approaching him. The officials knowing of this will ravage my estate, I shall continue unemployed, and all sorts of troubles will befall me.—He began to reproach himself severely, and tried to think how he could act. Meanwhile the day was advancing, and it was about two (eight) o'clock when his slaves came and told him that the vizier was passing through the main road. That, he said, is no business of mine.—Then another entering said: Sir, he has turned out of the main road into our street.—Then they trooped in to tell him that the vizier was (**215**) outside the house demanding admission. The sheikh then rose, went out, and kissed the vizier's hand, saying: You have indeed, God help you, adopted a generous line!—Do not thank me, he answered, thank the Caliph, whose life may God prolong!—He then entered the house and said: When you went away, I was annoyed by your language, and the words which I had addressed to you were said in vexation and without serious intent. I had to ride at once to the Caliph, who spoke to me when my thoughts were still full of what had

passed between us, and, finding my utterance confused, he adjured me to tell him about it, which I did. He took me to task severely for the reception which I had given you, and told me to come to you without delay and apologize ; I was also to bring you out of your house, grant your application, and look into your affairs.—Ibn Abī A*d*jam continued : The vizier then called for an inkstand, and wrote out the necessary documents which assured me of what I had solicited, a sum of money as a present, and a post which I was to occupy. I thanked him, invoked a blessing on the Caliph and prasied God for His favour towards me.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn Suhail al-*H*addhā after Abu'l-*H*asan 'Alī b. 'Abdallāh al-*H*addhā after the *S*ūfī Ja'far Khālidī as follows : We were, said the last, with the *S*ūfī Ibn Wā*s*il in the year 311 (began April 21, 923 A.D.) at Habīr, and when the battle began and the slaughter of the caravan commenced, we gathered about him, asking him to pray to God to deliver us. He said : This is no time for prayer, it is the time for resignation. When doom descends, prayer profits not.

I was present when Abū 'Abdallāh Ibn *H*ajjāj the Baghdad clerk, and indecent satirist, recited certain verses to the vizier Abu'l-Fa*d*l with reference to the day whereon the family of Abu'l-Faraj Mohammed b. 'Abbās and his retinue were arrested in Baghdad, whereas Abu'l-Fa*d*l 'Abbās b. *H*usain, who had been imprisoned in the house of Abu'l-Faraj, was released and invested with the vizierate. In that house he remained the greater part of the day, which was Tuesday the 17th Sha'ban 360 (May 15, 971). (**216**). The next day, a Wednesday, he received his robe of honour. It was also on a Wednesday that he had been arrested and the robe of honour bestowed on Abu'l-Faraj, who displaced him as vizier. Between the two events four hundred days had elapsed. On the former occasion Abu'l-Faraj had come and in-

stalled himself in the house of Abu'l-Fa*d*l and started as vizier. The verses are :

> Master whose rise from dungeon deep
> Is sweeter to my eyes than sleep,
> No wrong by you was ever done
> Nor would you injure any one.
> What they advanced you now repay
> In counsel, quarters, and the day.

Then he left the room and held a public assembly in the house of the vizier Abu'l-Fa*d*l.

A chief-clerk who was present, recited some verses by Ibn Zuraiq on a similar theme. This was Abu'l-Qāsim Ibn Abī Zanjī, who said that Ibn Zuraiq had recited to him some verses of his own composed when Kūfī was cashiered :

> As door-keeper you have caused us vexation ;
> Your object should not be our humiliation.
> Be not over-hasty ; hear out my advice,
> I seek not therewith either chattels or price.
> In this very house on this throne in this room
> Was a mighty one's seat and a mighty one's doom.

Some verses of her own were recited to me by 'A'idah daughter of Mohammed, Juhaniyyah, a talented woman who was the wife of the uncle of the vizier Ibn Shīrzād, and acted as his deputy when he was secretary to Bachkam and Sabuktakin, in Abū Ja'far (Ibn Shīrzād)'s office. He was visited by Ibn Zuraiq, who was not admitted, but presently obtained admission by a ruse which he recounted to us. I recited these verses to him (he said) ; when Ibn Shīrzād was appointed vizier, he helped him (Ibn Zuraiq) and took him into his service. When *H*asan b. 'Alī the Astrologer was arrested and his daughter was imprisoned in my father's house, this woman ('A'idah), at that time advanced in years, was given charge of her. She used to recite verses with us, and repeat some excellent ones of her own. (**217**) She informed me that

she had composed the following satire on Abū Ja'far Mohammed b. Qāsim Karkhī, when he became vizier; in it she taunts him with his puny size:

When New Year's Day came Mohammed of Karkh
Desired my advice with his usual smirk:
What present, he said, shall we give to the King:
Of all I possess what will be the best thing?
I answered, all gifts but the one I suggest
Will compass no purpose but ruinous waste.
Present him, vizier, with yourself; and when he
Illuminates, you will his mannikin be.

She recited this to me in the year 342 (began May 18, 953 A.D.). The word for mannikin, *dūbārakah,* is Persian, and signifies a doll, of the size of a boy, which the people of Baghdad decorate and put on their roofs oh the night of the Mu'ta*d*idi New Year's Day[1]; with this they amuse themselves, and they bring it out splendidly arrayed with ornaments like those of a bride, and before which they flourish drums and flutes and light fires. This woman's satire was in my opinion fully justified, for it suited a woman's style; but she also recited to me verses of her own more masculine than these, which I copied down and have inserted in various places in my books. The above were the only verses of hers that stuck in my memory.

* * * *

I was told the following by my father. One day, he said, Abu'l-*H*asan the clerk came out to us and asked whether we knew a man in Baghdad named Ibn As*d*a*k*. No one in the room knew him except me. So I said Yes, and how come you to ask about him?—He said: What is he doing?—I replied that he was chanting dirges over *H*usain.—Abu'l-*H*asan shed tears and said: In my house there is an old woman of Karkh Juddān who was my nurse, who speaks with difficulty, her natural language

[1] June 11, see Sachau's Alberimi, *Chronology of Ancient Nations,* p. 158, where other practice of the Baghdadi's are mentioned.

being Nabataean, and is unable to pronounce an Arabic word correctly, still less of course to repeat poetry. She is however a saintly Moslem woman, whose fasts and vigils are numerous. Yesterday she woke up in the middle of the night, her sleeping-place being at a distance from where I was, and cried out: Abu'l-*H*asan!—I asked her what was the matter. She told me to come to her. When I came, I found her shivering. When I asked what had happened to her, she said that after saying her devotional prayer, she went to sleep, and dreamed that she was in one of the streets of Karkh and saw a clean white chamber, panelled with teak and with the door open, with women standing by it. I asked them, she said, who was dead and what were the news. They pointed to the inside of the house, and when I entered, I came to a clean and beautiful chamber, in the midst of which there was a young woman as beautiful, majestic and charming as any I had ever seen, clothed in fair white robes of soft material from Merv, with a mantle round her of extraordinary whiteness, and in her bosom the head of a man weltering in blood. To my question who she was she replied Never mind; I am Fā*t*imah daughter of the Prophet and this is the head of my son *H*usain. Bid Ibn (**219**) A*s*daq chant

> That last solace too was failing,
> Nursing him, nor was he ailing.

And I woke up in a fright.—The old woman, he said, mispronounced the Arabic word for "nurse," being unable to pronounce the letter d*ād* correctly. I quieted her till she slept, he said, and then addressing me proceeded: Abu'l-Qāsim, as you know the man, I entrust you with the commission which remains in your keeping until you convey it to him. I answered that I gladly obeyed the orders of the Queen of the worlds; now this was in Sha'bān, and people were experiencing great annoyance from the *H*anbalites when they wished to go

out to *H*ā'ir ; but I employed a great deal of suavity and so got out and was in Hā'ir on the night of the middle of Sha'bān, and asked for Ibn A*s*daq. When I saw him I told him that our lady Fā*t*imah desired him to chant the dirge that contains the lines cited ; a poem which I had not known before. He was astonished at this, and I proceeded to tell him and those who were present the story. They burst out wailing, and that night he chanted no other dirge but this. The first couplet of it is

> Weep ye eyes, your streams releasing,
> Never ceasing, but increasing,

and it is by a poet of Kufah.

My father and Ibn Ayyāsh both related how there was in Baghdad a skilful and accomplished wailing-woman called Khullab, who chanted this dirge. We heard her, they said, in the house of one of the magnates because at that time people were unable to perform the wailing otherwise than under the shadow of authority or in secret. The wailing consisted of dirges on *H*usain and the family of the Prophet, (**220**) without aspersions on the early Moslems. They added that according to a statement which reached them Barbahārī said : I hear that there is a wailing-woman named Khullab who wails over *H*usain ; find her and execute her.

I was told by my father on the authority of the hero of the story, by a chain of tradition which he gave, that Abū *H*assān Ziyādī was one of the leading jurists of our school,[1] and a disciple of Abū Yūsuf, and further a traditionalist. He at one time held a judgeship, but was afterwards out of employment, and became very poor. He frequented a mosque which was opposite his dwelling, where he gave opinions, taught law, led prayer, and repeated traditions. Each day his financial difficulties increased while his efforts at obtaining employment or allowance

[1] *i.e.*, Hanefite.

were unsuccessful. One day when he had exhausted all his funds, sold all his property, and incurred a heavy debt, he was visited by a man from Khorasan, who was in Baghdad at the time when people were leaving the city for Meccah. This man said to him : I am about to start on pilgrimage, and here are ten thousand dirhems which I have upon me ; take them as a deposit, and if I return from the pilgrimage restore it to me, whereas if the others return but I do not, then know that I have met my end, and it is a gift to you which you may use without scruple. —So, said Abū *H*assān, I took the deposit home, and told the story to my wife. She observed that we were in great straits, and that I had better make use of the money at once, pay my debts, and buy comforts, since perhaps God would make the money mine ultimately, and I should only have anticipated the enjoyment of it. I declined to do this, but the whole day and night she kept urging me and finally I assented. So the next day I broke the seal of the purse, paid my debt, purchased stores and comfort for my house, and clothes for her, myself and my daughters. For all these purposes I had spent some five thousand dirhems. After some three or four days as I turned round after prayer, I saw the man from Khorasan behind me. When I saw him, I was overwhelmed with confusion, and (**221**) asked him what had happened. He said that he had abandoned his journey to Meccah, and wished to stay in Baghdad ; please then, he said, return me the deposit.—I said : I cannot do it this moment, come to me to-morrow morning.—He departed, and I too started homeward, but scarcely had the strength to walk the distance between the mosque and my house ; and I fainted when I got inside. My household collected and when I was conscious they asked me what had befallen me. I said to them : You induced me to use the money of that man from Khorasan, and he has just come back and is demanding it. What am I to do ? I shall be disgraced

and my reputation will be gone, I shall disappear from among men, be imprisoned and die of hardship. They howled and so did I, and when the prayer of sunset was to be said, I was unable to go out to the mosque, as also when it was time for evening prayer. So I prayed at home, and said : This is a matter which God only can set right, and with Him only can I take refuge.—So I renewed my purification and put my feet close together in the sanctuary praying, weeping, and supplicating, until I had finished the Qur'ān. Dawn was near breaking and I had had no sleep and I said to my people : The man will soon be coming to the mosque, and what am I to do ?—They told me that they did not know. I ordered them to saddle a mule which I had and rode, saying to them : I am now going to ride, I know not whither, and I shall not return to you ; for though I were to perish I have not the face to speak to the man from Khorasan. If he demands the money of you and threatens you with trouble, give him the remains of the money and tell him the truth ; but if you can put him off, leave me with my credit unimpaired and perhaps I may return with deliverance or some scheme for dealing with him.—So I rode forth not knowing my destination, without lantern or slave, leaving the mule's rein upon its neck. It brought me to the Bridge, which I crossed to the Eastern side. I did not dismount but let it take me to the *T*āq Gate, whence it turned into the great road which leads to the Caliph's Palace. Midway we came into a great procession with lights and people coming from the direction of the Palace. I thought (222) I had best get out of the way in order not to be jostled by their horses, so I drew the rein with the intention of going up one of the side streets. They then shouted to me, and when I stopped asked me who I was. A jurist, I replied. They then seized me, and when I resisted, the head of the party came and said : Who are you, God have mercy on you ? No harm will befall you if you tell the truth.—

I replied that I was jurist and a judge. What is your name? he asked. Abū *H*assān Ziyādī, I replied. At this he cried out: *Allāh akbar* (God is greater!) repeatedly, and bade me answer the call of the Commander of the Faithful. So I went along with him until I was brought before Ma'mūn, who asked me who I was. I said: A jurist and judge known as the Ziyādite, though not really a member of that tribe; happening to dwell in one of their quarters I was counted as one of them.—What, he asked, is your patronymic?—Abū *H*assān, I replied. Tell me, he said, what has befallen you, and what is your story; for the Prophet would not let me sleep yesterday on your account. He came to me once in the beginning of the night and again in the middle, saying *Assist Abu* H*assān the Ziyādite.* I woke up, but not knowing you I forgot to ask about you; but just now he came to me and said *Assist Abū* H*assān the Ziyādite,* and I did not venture to go to sleep again, but have kept awake since then, and have despatched people on both sides of the city to find you. What then is your story?—So I told him the truth, concealing nothing, saying that I was a man who had served Rashīd as judge in a certain region under Abū Yūsuf, but that after his death I had been cashiered and my allowance had been stopped, and I had been continuously unemployed and in straits, and then this had occurred with the man from Khorasan. We both burst into tears, and he said: *We are God's and to Him do we return,* bring five thousand dirhems!—They brought them and he bade me take them and replace with them those which I had spent. Then he ordered another ten thousand to be brought, and bade me take them and use them for the settlement of my affairs, and the purchase of comforts. Then he ordered thirty thousand more to be brought and bade me use them for the outfit and the marriage of my daughters. And, he said, on the next fête day present yourself before us in black that we may appoint you to a

post and (**223**) assign you an allowance.—I praised God, thanked Him, invoked prayers on the Prophet and blessings on the Commander of the Faithful, and went home laden with the money. When I got there the sun had not yet risen, and the people were waiting for me to come out and lead prayer, and were vexed at my procrastination. Dismounting I led them in prayer and when I had pronounced the blessing I saw the man from Khorasan. Taking him into my house I produced the remains of his money, and he remarked that the seal had been tampered with. I said : Take this, which is what remains of your money, for I have been using it ; then, pointing to the money that I had brought, I said : Take the balance.—He asked me to explain what had occurred, and when I told him the story, he was deeply affected, and vowed that he would take nothing. I adjured him, but he said No, I will not take it, nor take into my possession any of these people's property.—So I began to think about my daughters, their marriage and their outfit, and ordered the purchase of a black uniform, a horse and a slave, and went to Ma'mūn on the fête day, was received, saluted, and was placed with the judges. He produced a deed of investiture from beneath his oratory, which he handed to me, telling me that he appointed me judge of the Western side. This, he said, is my deed of investiture, and fear God ; I have ordered a certain sum to be paid you as allowance every month.—Abū *H*assān continued to occupy this office through the days of Ma'mūn.

I was told by my father the following which he heard from *S*ūlī and *S*ūlī from 'Ubaidallāh b. 'Abdallāh b. *T*āhir. When my brother Mohammed b. 'Abdallāh, he said, returned from the slaughter of Ya*h*yā b. 'Umar the 'Alawid, after a short time had elapsed, I went in one morning to see him. He was in great distress with his head bowed, so afflicted that one might have thought he was awaiting execution. Some of his slave-girls were

standing there, not venturing to address him, so too was his sister. I did not presume to address him, but signalled to his sister, asking what the matter was. She said: He has been alarmed by a dream which he has seen. Approaching him I then said: Prince (**224**), it is recorded that the Prophet said: If any of you see in his dream what he dislikes, let him turn over to the other side, say three times *I ask the forgiveness of God,* curse Iblīs (Satan), implore God's protection, and go to sleep again.—He raised his head, and said: But how, brother, if the catastrophe come from the Prophet of God himself?—Then he said to me: Do not you remember the dream of *T*āhir b. *H*usain?—I said that I did. ('Ubaidallāh stated that when *T*āhir was of humble estate he saw the Prophet in a dream, who said to him: *T*āhir, you shall reach high rank in the world. Fear God and protect me in the person of my descendants, for so long as you protect me in them you shall yourself find protection. *T*āhir, he added, never consented to fight against a descendant of 'Alī at any time, though he was many times called upon by the sovereign to do so.)—Then my brother Mohammed b. 'Abdallāh said to me: I saw the Prophet in a dream yesterday, and he seemed to be saying to me: Mohammed, ye are forsworn.—I woke up in a fright, changed to the other side, asked God's forgiveness, cursed Iblīs, asked forgiveness, and went to sleep again. Then I saw him a second time, saying Mohammed, ye are forsworn.—I did as I had done the first time, then I saw the Prophet the third time, and he was saying: Ye are forsworn, ye have slain my children, by Allāh henceforth ye shall never prosper.—I woke and have been in the state you see; since midnight I have not slept.—He burst forth weeping, and I wept also, and but a short time elapsed before Mohammed was dead, and we all of us suffered severe reverses, were dismissed from our governorships, and sank more and more into obscurity until our names were no more mentioned from any

pulpit nor our flags seen in any army or province. And we have been undergoing tribulations ever since.

(225) I was told by several people in the capital that a certain perfumer in Karkh, who was of excellent reputation, fell into debt ; leaving his shop on a Friday (Thursday) night, he said his prayer, offered supplication and went to sleep. In my dream, he said, I saw the Prophet, who said to me : Go to the vizier 'Alī b. 'Īsā, for I have commanded him to give thee four hundred dinars, wherewith thou shalt set in order thy affairs.—Now what I owed was six hundred dinars. The next morning I said to myself : The Prophet has told us that *whosoever sees him in a dream sees him really ; for Satan dare not impersonate him.* Why should I not go to the vizier ?—So I went to him, but when I reached the door, I was not accorded admittance, and sat until I felt discouraged and bethought me of departing ; when out came his friend Shāfi'ī, who knew me slightly, and I told him the story. My friend, he said, the vizier has been looking for you since the morning, and I have been asking about you, but no one gave me news of you, and messengers have been despatched in search of you. Stop where you are.—He left me and went inside, and immediately I was invited to present myself before Abu'l-*H*asan 'Alī b. 'Īsā. He asked me my name, which I told him, and whether I belonged to Karkh, and I said I did. Then he said : My friend, God reward you for coming to me ; for since yesterday, I assure you, I have had no pleasure in life ; the Prophet came to me in a dream and bade me give a person of your name who was a perfumer in Karkh four hundred dinars, to set his affairs in order ; the whole day I have been searching for you, and no one has been able to tell me about you.—Then he ordered a thousand dinars to be fetched, and they were brought in gold, and he said : Take four hundred in obedience to the command of the Prophet, and six hundred as a gift from me to you.—**(226)** Vizier,

I answered, I should not like to add anything to the gift of the Prophet ; for it is thence that I hope for a blessing not elsewhere.—'Alī b. 'Īsā was deeply affected and said : This is the truth. Take what you please.—So I took four hundred dinars and departed. Telling my story to a friend of mine, to whom I showed the dinars, I asked him to confront me with my creditors, and to act as intermediary. He did this, and they offered to wait three years for payment, provided I reopened my shop. I suggested that they should take a third of the amount due to them which in all was six hundred dinars. In accordance with this I gave each of them one third of what I owed him, the dividend coming to two hundred dinars ; the remaining two hundred was used to run the business, and before the year had reached its end I had got a thousand dinars, out of which I paid the remainder of my debt. My wealth continued to increase and my affairs to prosper.

I was told the following by Abū A*h*mad *H*ārithī Ibn 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar : I saw in a dream, he said, as though I were passing by the police-station in the quarter of the Banū Numair in Basrah, where a crowd was collected. I asked what was the matter, and was told that a young man was to be executed. I looked over the circle and saw a handsome lad who had been forced to sit down and was being bound with a view to decapitation. He said to them : Let me say two words and then do what you like. —They bade him speak. He then asked whether any educated man were present who could commit to memory what he was going to say ; I replied that I could. He then said :

> Ye twain who witness lovesick swain expire,
> Take purest greeting sweetened by desire
> To cherry-lipped gazelle on Hima's moor,
> Where Othman's visitors approach his door.
> Tell her the lover who is overcome
> By the fell hands of ever watchful doom,
> Though gone will in his breast your love retain
> Till He who slays him give him life again.

(**227**) Then he said to me : Retain them in your memory, my nephew, for there is no fifth word which rhymes with the four last words if the *sād* always precedes the *dāl*. Then he was decapitated, and I woke up repeating the lines, which I wrote down at once. I searched for a fifth rhyme but my memory and my knowledge failed to supply one. (I also made a search and found two, and do not know how they escaped Abū A*h*mad ; perhaps some other inquirer may find others. In any case the rhyme is a rare one if this condition be observed).

The following was told me by my father : When Mu'ta*d*id went to Tarsus to fight with Wasīf the slave, and after capturing him returned to Antioch, he encamped outside and encircled the place with his army. I was a schoolboy at the time, but I went out with the others and saw him clad in a yellow habit, without any black badge. I heard a man call attention to this. Then one of the soldiers said that he had that habit on him when he was seated in his palace in Baghdad and was told of Wa*s*īf's rebellion ; that he started out immediately from his Palace to the Shammāsiyyah Gate where he established his camp, vowing that he would not change that habit until he had finished the business of Wa*s*īf. He remained some days by the Shammāsiyyah Gate until his forces were assembled and then started forth wearing the same habit which he has not changed until now. My father continued the tale thus : Mu'ta*d*id proceeded to send workmen to destroy the wall of Antioch, and this caused a tumult among the people of the place, and grumblings among the vulgar ; the old men debated the matter and agreed to restrain the mob, but to go to the Caliph's tent and solicit an audience. The Caliph sent word that they might choose ten of their number as a deputation. Ten were chosen, of whom I, he said, was one ; we entered and saluted, and stood until we were ordered to be seated. The delegates then said : Commander of the Faithful, we are in the presence of a

savage enemy, and in constant conflict; **(228)** nightly attacks are made by him on us and by us on him; if you demolish this wall, that will furnish him with powerful aid against us, and the city will be his as the result of the slightest defeat that befalls us or accident that occurs. Please then to have pity on our weakness and suffer our children to have the protection of this wall.—He replied: Troubles have repeatedly come upon us from these frontiers, through every rebel entrenching himself in one of the fortresses; you know what happened yesterday in the case of Ibn al-Sheikh and to-day in that of this slave. I have further pledged my word that I shall not leave a fortress undemolished. I must therefore destroy this wall, but I will protect you against the enemy by multiplying the numbers of the garrison, sending the pay regularly and bestowing gratuities on the volunteers, to enable them to resist the enemy; their force will be sufficient to keep him off, and the wall will seem still to be there, whilst no one will be able to entrench himself within it for the purpose of rebellion.—None of my colleagues was prepared with a plea and their powers of speech failed them; and the meeting was about to break up with this result, when I rose and asked permission to speak. When it was granted, I said: Commander of the Faithful, if God had accorded immortality to any one on earth, it would have been to the Prophet Mohammed; and these forts and walls were not built for a single year or for the time of a single Caliph, but were intended to last for the ages, and to protect the inhabitants in the days of every sovereign whether he were vigilant or negligent. If we could rely on the life of the Commander of the Faithful lasting for ever, we should not ask for any change in his plans; or if we could be confident that his successors in the sovereignty over the Moslems would be as careful of their interests as he, and as vigilant over great and small, that would lighten our affliction over the loss of this wall, for which there is no substitute. Even

if the person who shall take charge of us after him were to be like him, that would be no solace for the loss of the wall, since we could not be sure but that the successor of *that* Caliph would be negligent or distracted by some occurrence from attending to our interests, leaving us a target for the Byzantine swords and spears. If you, Commander of the Faithful, destroy this wall, our city will remain so long as you are (**229**) alive, but after your time it will be taken out of the hands of the Moslems, the Byzantines will slaughter us and make captives of our children, and you will be involved in our guilt on the Day of Judgment and our disgrace in this world. I adjure you by God to spare us. I have told you the truth, Commander of the Faithful, and what remains is in your hands.—Mu'ta*d*id hung down his head for a time, then he raised it again deeply affected, and said : But how am I to act, seeing that I have pledged my word that I am going to demolish it ?—I said : Let the workmen operate to-day only, so as to keep the promise of the Commander of the Faithful ; then, when he has departed from us, let him give us permission to restore what has been demolished on this day only.—He told us to send on the morrow to stop the workmen and prevent them from continuing to demolish the wall. He added that he gave us permission to repair what had been demolished. We thanked him and invoked a blessing upon him, which a general cheer confirmed. On our way back we found that the workmen had that day pulled down part of the wall, which after the departure of Mu'ta*d*id we proceeded to repair at our own expense. That part is still discernible owing to its difference from the original masonry.

I once talked with Abu'l-*H*asan the clerk of Ahwāz, a wise and excellent man, sagacious, generous, skilled in his craft, and highly promoted, since he occupied important posts in the service of the Sultan, being deputy to Abū Abdallāh Barīdī as governor of Ahwāz, and its

governor for Mu'izz al-daulah in lieu of Abū 'Abdallāh Barīdī, when the last had fled before Mu'izz al-daulah; afterwards Abu'l-Qāsim Barīdī made him his deputy over Basrah, and presently he acted as deputy for Abu 'Alī *T*abarī and Abu Mohammed Muhallabī; who at that time was governor of the districts of Ahwāz. Then he undertook the government of Basrah for Subāshī the Turkish chamberlain from Khwārizm, as afterwards for Mu'izz al-daulah when Abu Mohammed Muhallabī was vizier. "He milked all the breasts of time," had experience of affairs and had tested fortune. Our subject was fortune and its vicissitudes, the estrangement of friends therein and the paucity of real affection; and the saying which I had heard ascribed to Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn Furāt: *God's blessing be upon those whom I know not and who know me not,* (**230**) with another: *I made a list of the troubles that had befallen me, and found none which had for its source any one to whom I had not done a kindness.* Abu'l-*H*asan said: This is true, only it is a new thing, which is due to the misery of the time; for in old times most people were faithful to their friendships in spite of the changes of fortune. Since human nature has deteriorated and people have become less strict in their notions about friendship and its obligations, men have felt secure about those whom they know not, and expect no harm from them, whereas mischief they think will only come upon them from their acquaintances, or those who come within the category of friends.

The reason is that they demand of their friends what they would not themselves do. If a man bestows on them a favour, the taste of receiving is acquired, and that produces slight hostility. If a man constantly bears in mind their favours, he becomes their slave. If he aims at reciprocity, hostility becomes acute, and troubles follow apace, even if the person whom you suppose to be a friend does not start actually injuring you, still through ungrounded suspicions and misunderstandings which

do not admit of being set right. When there is more than acquaintance between you, then the mischief comes from the confidence that is inspired ; for every trouble which overtakes you, if you consider it carefully, comes from some one who knows you and intends to bring it on you, with knowledge about you ; whereas mischief is less likely to come from people whom you do not know, *e.g.* robbers who attack you on the high road, meaning to take indifferently your money and that of others, etc., though even here the most serious danger comes from robbers who knowingly aim at robbing some particular man. I advise therefore the prudent person in our time to have as few acquaintances and nominal friends as possible, knowing that thereby he reduces the number of his enemies, whereas by increasing their numbers he increases those of his enemies ; Ibn Alwā has expressed this concisely thus :

From friend is foe begot ;
Friends multiply thou not.
(231) Direst disease, I think,
Comes out of food or drink.

The following verses are by Abū Firās son of Abu'l-'Alā Sa'īd b. *H*amdān b. Hamdūn 'Adawī Taghlibī :

Thy fiercest foe is one thou dost not fight :
Thy kindest friend is one far out of sight.
Much knowledge have I gained of men and days,
Experiment has trained me in their ways.
And from the furthest furthest is my fear ;
While danger from the nearest is most near.
The trusted comrade is the foe who harms :
The enemy avowéd least alarms.
That is no home where none has friendly mind :
They are no kinfolk of whom none is kind.
Connexion is connexion of the heart ;
Thy neighbour he who distant takes thy part.

Also :

If worth bring no advantage on this earth,
Then to be worthless thought is better worth.
A wise man who becomes a dunce's thrall
Is the worst waste of good material.

Also :

Despair and resignation are my fate :
With whom shall I complain or remonstrate ?
Fidelity I claim in faithless days :
You'd think I knew them not nor people's ways.

Also :

Friends I have served and they my service known
When by their wish I've left them quite alone.
(332) The sweets of life I left without a care,
Finding the bitter take the lion's share.
No man who stays at home can do his best :
As hawk can find no quarry in its nest.

Also :

Some men, you will find, you must humiliate
Before they will ever allow you are great.
Avoid conversation with men you despise :
In that and that only nobility lies.

Also :

Man's worth is in himself :
It is not in his pelf.
Soul's wealth in wise man's eyes
Surpasses treasuries.

Also :

Our masters we treat with disdain,
And, guilty ourselves, we complain :
With language and taunts unrefined,
And tongues that discord with the mind.

Also :

I know quite well, though I rebel—
That neck, those limbs, as I can tell,
Conceal a sun and a gazelle.

Also :

The patience which long was my boast
The day that we parted was lost.
My eyelids expended their store
Till cheeks said " in mercy, no more ! "

Also :

A friend I have who doth abide
My comrade whatsoe'er betide ;
My tears his mem'ry, could he see,
At draught of morn and eve sets free ;
Hid in my cup lest one behold
They mingle agate with its gold.

Also :

Know ye of mine one faithful friend
Or comrade loyal to the end ?
God show no favour to the fate
Which parting leaves us desolate !

Also :

There are tokens and signs in thine eyes
  That thou art consoled.
I see it besides in thy heart :
  For *my* heart has told.
No fire can rekindle the love
  That once has grown cold.

Also :

Grief amasses, patience scatters ;
Love unites, but on some matters
Disagrees ; when eyes are sleeping
Mine are waking or are weeping.
Had thy gaze, fair maid, not charmed me,
Never had my vision harmed me.
But on me thy glance went straying :
Then thy folk depart conveying
Far away upon the morrow
Eyes whence all their beauty borrow

Also :

Chider of my passion, glance,
And admit your ignorance,
On that neck like rose with dew
Scented, fair and fragrant too.

Also :

One clad in her tresses
With ringlets depending
(234) Like rings of cuirasses
Close-woven descending.

Also :

O night, whose sweets I'll ne'er forget :
All joys therein together met.
The bottle, she, and I, sat up,
And each to other passed the cup.
Did the black clusters on her head
Give wine to make her lips so red ?

Also :

Two wines that night our page did pass :
One from his cheek, one from the glass.
He with his cheeks aglow with flame,
When down his raven tresses came,
Wine from those clusters seemed to mix
With sweet rose-water from his cheeks.

Also :

A fawn within my heart has lair
Where hills and dales all disappear.
A fawn from throat and chest, I guess,
From shyness and from waywardness.

Also :

Her cheeks make havoc with the lover's mind ;
So many beauties are therein combined.
Hue of red roses tinting whitest skin :
Like tint of wine with water poured therein.
Or thin white robe beneath a red robe thin.

Also :

The eye that sees the falling snows
Might think them petals of white rose
Raining on men with sheets for clothes.[1]

(235) Also :

Spanned by the bridge the waters shine
Like white chart ruled with one black line.
And we might seem some Moses' host
Safe on the land, the Red Sea crossed.

*H*usain and Ibrāhīm the sons of Nā*s*ir al-daulah had conspired against their brother Abū Taghlib Fa*d*l Allah after he had arrested their brother Mohammed and imprisoned him in the fortress, and seized his possessions. They invaded his provinces with the view of making war upon him in concert with another brother, *H*amdān, with whom they joined forces. Abū Taghlib came out against them with his armies, *H*amdān was routed, *H*usain deserted to Abū Taghlib, while Ibrāhīm departed to Baghdad to seek safety at the Sultan's door. This affair commenced in Shaʿbān 360 (began May 30, 971

[1] Conjectural rendering of a difficult word.

A.D.) and peace was concluded in Shawwāl (began July 28). Abū Mohammed Ya*h*yā b. Mohammed b. Sulaimān b. Fahd wrote the following letter of congratulation to Abū Taghlib on the subject :

"God's way is still, as it has ever been with our lord and master the Prince (God preserve him, help him unceasingly and subdue his enemies), to bestow on him glorious gifts, and constant unique favours, continuously directing him and compassing his ends ; all because of the good intentions and true faith which God has put into his mind beyond all other men, and the steady pursuit of right in all his undertakings which is his privilege from God. His commencements (God help him always !) presage favourable issues ; and augur success in both the beginnings and endings of his affairs. His plans, thank God !, (**236**) are mated with correctness, and his banners have victory attached to them. By his gratitude he retains God's favour, and in proportion thereto he may look to increase thereof, and to augmented assistance ; his sublime qualities, his precious and exalted virtues, his praiseworthy and God-pleasing disposition will be reinforced with yet further gifts from God, who will unceasingly defend him, and enrich him, showering His blessings upon him, giving him the upper hand, and assigning to his enemies the lower : making his name (God establish it !) renowned in all lands, and making his firesticks (God kindle them !) blaze more brightly than all others. Bearers of news to distant countries will celebrate his fame, tongues near and far lavish their thanks upon him.

Praise be to God for the bounty which He has bestowed upon him, and unto Him we turn for the increase of His gifts : praying that He may guard him in the commencement and the conclusion of every enterprise, and exalt him above all who envy him or oppose him, and through inability to reach his goal would thwart him. Praise be to God who has crowned his journey with

success, made it fortunate both when he moved and when he rested, auspicious at all seasons, earning praise both when he halted and when he started afresh: presaging a successful issue, in fairest style by fairest means: winning his subjects' gratitude and blessings: uniting their dispositions, however different their ideas.

From God we hope for help unto that which will bring us near to Him: from Him we ask for guidance into what will earn His favour. Truly He is the faithful Friend, the Almighty.

Now truly God (to whom be glory) has realized the thoughts of his friends and subjects concerning him, and by the victory over his enemies wherewith He has favoured him, has brought about the anticipations of his servants and the slaves of his bounty. And their gratitude to God for His help and favour unto him is in proportion to their scope, their magnitude, their object, the portion which concerns them, and that which extends beyond them to others, and wherein both near and distant share. **(237)** No traitor shall raise his standard but God shall abase it through some faithful worshipper like him: no hope shall ever be harboured by the wrong cause but God shall bring it to naught by the most loyal of His servants. God has said concerning His servants, meaning to make His host the victors, and His foes the vanquished, and to establish His right at the hand of him who deserves it (Surah viii. 44) *that whoso perishes may perish by demonstration, and whoso lives may live by demonstration: and verily God is hearing, knowing;* and (xxxiii. 25) *God has sent away those that disbelieved in their wrath having gained no good* save from him, God guard him; *and God has saved the believers from fighting; now God is mighty, powerful.*

May God then cause our lord the prince to enjoy His favours, and double the portion of His gifts unto him; bring prosperity through him and at his hands; cause him to attain blessing and felicity, rebuke his enemies

and traducers ; realize his wishes in things spiritual and temporal ; never strip him of the robe of His favour ; guard the nation by guarding his life ; avert the evil eye from his dynasty ; make firm its pillars by His power ; happy is he who is helped to enter his service, and enjoys his good opinion ; miserable is he who flies from his protection, departs from his shade, and from his company. God is his friend, his defender, and the protector of Islam and its followers by lengthening his life, and their benefactor by guarding his soul. 'He is enough for us, and a good Trustee is He !' "

I was told by Abu'l-Faraj Babbaghā how in Saif al-daulah's presence it was announced that the mother of one of his followers had married. We were talking about epistolary composition. He told me to write a letter to be posted at once in my own name to this man, consoling him on his mother's marriage. I composed the following straight off in his presence :

" He who follows the paths of prolixity will find no difficulty about a style of address which calls for **(238)** brevity. I have received an announcement about one who has claims upon you, and is called after you even as you are called after her : may God protect her in taking a step which were it not the object of disapproval, and forbidden by the code of honour, would have given you satisfaction more than all others, you being most bound to esteem the renewal of her coverture. Do not therefore be irritated by what the enforcer of the law approves and the practice of correspondence justifies. What God permits had best be followed ; and be not you one of those who when they would not themselves choose a thing resent the choice of it by destiny. Farewell."

The following was told me by Abū Mohammed Ya*h*yā b. Mohammed b. Fahd : There was in Slave-house Street a girl of the family of 'Alī who had been paralysed some fifteen years, and was visited by my father. She was so swathed that she could neither turn herself no be turned

from side to side, could neither sit nor be made to sit; she had an attendant to move her and help her to eat. Being poor, she depended on charity for her support, and when my father died became very poor. Tajnī, slave-girl of Abū Mohammed Muhallabī, hearing about her, looked after her. One morning after spending the night paralysed, as described, she began to walk, was cured, and could stand up and sit down. We lived near and I could see the people thronging her door as at a parade. So I sent a veracious woman, who had seen her in her paralysed condition for a number of years, to inquire what had occurred. She said: I grew weary of myself and prayed God a long time that either I might have deliverance or death. Last night I was in great pain and was so restless and cried so much that the woman who attends me grew weary. When I was fast asleep I seemed to see a man enter my chamber. I was alarmed, but he said: Fear not, I am thy father. I supposed him to be 'Alī son of (**239**) Abū *T*alib, and said: Commander of the Faithful, do not you see the misery in which I am? If you would pray to God that he might give me health! But the man said: I am thy father Mohammed, the Apostle of God.—Then I said: O Apostle of God, pray God for me!—Then (she said) he moved his lips, and presently said to me: Give me thy hands!—I gave him my hands, which he took, then he made me sit; then he raised me up and said: Rise in the name of God!—I said; O Apostle of God, how can I rise?—He said: Give me thy hands!—He took them and raised me up. Then he said: In the name of God walk!—I said: How shall I walk?—He said: Give me thy hand!—Then he made me walk, and then I sat down. He did this with me three times, then he said to me: God has given thee health, so praise Him.—After this he left me and departed, and I woke up so quickly that I did not doubt that I saw him. I cried out and my attendant supposed that I wanted her services, or something disagreeable, whence

she was in no hurry to move; but I told her that I had seen the Apostle of God in my dream, and had woken up swathed. She asked for an account of the matter, and I said: I saw the Apostle of God and he prayed for me, in my dream, and said God has given thee health.—Then the old woman said to me: Then I hope that you are cured of your ailment; give me your hands.—She proceeded to speak to me just as the Prophet had spoken in my dream, though I had not told her that; she bade me rise, and I rose, but feeling weary sat down; she went through the scene three times, and then I rose and walked in their presence, leaning—in the presence of the people who crowded to see me that night and the morrow till I nearly perished. My strength however kept returning until I could walk as I walk now without disfigurement.—I myself, he went on to say, saw her walking after that and coming to our family on foot; and she is still alive and in good health. She is the most virtuous, modest and pious woman (**240**) of whom I have heard in our time; knowing nothing but to pray and fast and earn her living in the most honourable way. She is still unmarried, and occupied with religion, and only known in the sanctuaries and by her people as "the paralysed 'Alawid."

I heard the chief qā*d*ī, Abu'l-Sā'ib 'Utbah b. 'Abdallāh b. Mūsā, say: If a witness have not in him three of the qualities of the damned, then he is himself one of them. When I asked what they were, he replied: *Shamelessness*, for if the witness be bashful, he assents to whatever he is asked, however absurd, whence his religion is annulled and he becomes one of the damned. Now shame properly belongs to Faith, and the Faithful are in Paradise as the tradition asserts. Shamelessness then is one of the qualities of the damned. The second is *suspicion:* for, if he be unsuspecting, he falls a victim to schemes and falsifications, and attests what is false, thereby earning damnation. If he be suspicious he escapes such pitfalls. Now suspicion is properly a sin

as God says ; and sin is a quality of the damned.—I forget what the third was. He went on to ask : What think you of a city wherein to tens of thousands of inhabitants there are some ten witnesses, whom all the rest of the inhabitants are plotting to deceive ? How can these ten come safely through unless they be very devils for vigilance, acuteness, caution and intelligence ?

The following was told me by my father. There was, he said, an inhabitant of Antioch who waited on him and on me afterwards, called Abū Ibrāhīm. He was a profligate man, who played chess, and could do wonders therein. He used to play with my slaves, and when he played with them he used to kneel on the ground and lean on his arms, as though he were asleep, and one of them would come behind and pile upon his back a number of cushions, without his noticing, only when the game was over he would notice, throw them off his back (**241**) and abuse his slaves. He added the following story : One night I went to see a friend of mine, who also indulged in chess ; the time for the sunset prayer had arrived and he asked me to stay the night with him that we might play chess and converse. I declined, and then he proposed that we should pray and then play a game or two till the time of evening prayer, when I might go. We prayed and then he brought in a lamp, and we began to play ; I got so engrossed in the game that we did not notice how the night was passing, until finally we felt exceedingly tired, and at the same time heard the call to prayer. I said to him : Here is the call for the evening prayer, I am tired and must go.—He called his slaves, but they did not answer, so he rose up with me, and woke them, bidding them walk before me. When we went outside, we saw that it was the call to the *morning* prayer, and that the whole night had passed, without our knowing. He was so devoted to the game that when I reproached him he would say : I am not a devotee, the devotee is the kind of man who when on his deathbed

he is told to repeat the creed, says *Your king ; leave the rook alone.* I said to him : I know no one who is so great a devotee as you ; apparently you will not be satisfied until you have reached the stage which you have described.—He used to enumerate the virtues of chess, stating that it taught the art of war, sharpened the intellect, accustomed a man to think, and taught him forethought. It would be enough if there were this fact only about it that is wanting in all other things : that though it has been played for thousands of years by all mankind, no game has exactly repeated itself.

I was told of a backgammon-player who when the game went against him said to his antagonist : It is your victory ; invoke a blessing on the Prophet !—He replied : I did not do that for fear my victory might be struck by the evil eye !

I was told of another who when he was beaten was wont to blaspheme and suggest that he was beaten **(242)** by an act of God. His antagonist declined to play with him any more, on that ground. He then asked the antagonist to play on the understanding that he would not blaspheme. The man played and won several games. He said : I will not violate my undertaking not to blaspheme, only do you assure me that you meant no harm.

We were discussing the stress of the times and people's restlessness and discomfort, with their approval of miserliness which some call " caution " and others " management," and which they recommend to each other : the unwillingness of tradesmen to enter into transactions and of people to assist any one who has made a mistake or is in trouble, and to relieve distress ; and were accounting for this in most cases by their distressed circumstances ; when Abu'l-*H*asan b. Yūsuf said to me : When a learned man came to Baghdad at an earlier time our friends used to send him a thousand dirhems or some similar sum, without his having to ask any one, few as our friends were.

Once when a man arrived whom we wished to attach to ourselves in order to learn of him owing to his talents, and he required a hundred dirhems a month, I spoke to Ibrāhīm b. Khafīf the clerk, head of the spending department, who was one of our friends, and another of them, and the two gave him a stipend of a hundred dirhems a month, each paying half the sum, and he received this sum for years until he left Baghdad. One day one of the jurists who attended the meetings at the house of Abu'l-*H*asan Karkhī told me that the people who gathered there were in want of warm clothing, as the weather had got cold. I rose up and began to think to whom I should apply on this subject, and passing on my way by a certain house was told by one of my companions that it was the house of a wealthy (**243**) and benevolent merchant and that, although I did not know him, I had best apply to him. I obtained admittance, and though I did not know the man he recognized me, rose up and treated me with respect. When he asked me what I desired, I told him about the warm clothes, and he asked me how many we required. When I said fifty, he sent them with me at once, and I distributed them. A few days ago a man of a noble house came to me and complained of his poverty in a manner that moved me. All he wanted to set him up was, he said, from thirty to forty dirhems ; I could not hope that anyone would advance the sum, nor did I know any one on whom I could count to grant it if I asked for it. This year we had a visit from a friend of Abu Hāshim,[1] and we applied to a number of people to help him, and tried hard to get him something for the improvement of his fortune, but we had no result great or small. Now in the street wherein I live, Mahrawaihi Street, there were a number of governors, clerks, cultivators and merchants, whose joint fortunes I reckoned at four million dinars. To-day

[1] Doubtless Jubbā'i, the Mu'tazilite doctor.

there is no one in the street who owns four thousand dirhems except Abu'l-'Urbān brother of 'Imrān b. Shāhīn.

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(**244**) I was told by Abu'l-*H*usain A*h*mad b. Yūsuf b. Ya'qūb Ishāq b. al-Buhlūl Tanūkhī after his father that Asad b. Jahwar was very forgetful. One day, he said, I was present in the audience chamber of 'Abdallāh b. Sulaimān when this person was addressing him on some matter. Asad kept saying to him *I obey the orders of the qādī whom God exalt,* forgetting that he was vizier. By his side was seated Abu'l-'Abbas Ibn al-Furāt, who nudged him and said Say *the vizier.*—He replied : I meant the vizier, God exalt the qā*d*ī.—Ibn al-Furāt laughed and said : I am not the qā*d*ī ; go back to your friend and make a qā*d*ī of him.

One day I was with Asad and the ink-pot out of which he was writing ran dry. He bade his slave fetch a jug of water for the inkstand. The slave brought the jug for him to dilute the ink with, but Asad took it and drank it up. The slave went away, but was called back and told with a curse to fetch water for the inkstand. He did so and again Asad drank it up, and when the slave had departed, Asad, trying to ink his pen, found the vessel drier than ever. Plague on you, he said, how many times am I to ask for water for the ink before it is fetched ?—A third jug was then brought, and this too Asad was about to drink, when the slave suggested that he should pour it into the inkstand, and he said : Of course, and did so.

In the year 277,[1] he said, Ibn al-Furāt took me out to look after the repair of the roads, and the expenses of the feast, for which he imposed a large contribution on Kufah, of which Asad b. Jahwar was collector. When I got thither, though he was a friend of mine, he delayed calling on me, and I did the same to him ; this produced (**245**) bad blood between us, in consequence of which I was ruthless in exacting the money from him. He kept

[1] Began April 25, 890.

me waiting, hence there was a dispute, and I wrote to the vizier urging him to proceed against him, while he wrote complaining of me.

Despatches came to Shākir Is*h*āqī, governor of Kufah, bidding him arrange a meeting between us in the mosque, which was not to be broken up before I was satisfied. I mounted my horse and went to the gate of Is*h*āqī, and without entering informed him that I was on my way to the mosque. He mounted and came up with me. He told me that similar orders had come to him. I told him he had better fetch Asad. He rode to fetch him and when we met we interchanged various sallies until I said to him : Do you suppose that I do not know your father, and that he was a foot-guard at the gate of the Estate Office, earning two dinars a month ?—Now our meeting was on the first of Rama*d*ān, and before we had come to any conclusion the time for the prayer of sunset arrived. Shākir rose up, meaning to mount his horse, and Asad went with him, while I remained seated. They asked me why I sat, and I replied that I could not violate the order of the governor, which was that I was not to leave until we had come to a decision, or the money was produced. Shākir thereupon bade Asad sit with me and not budge. To me he said : Were it not that my remaining with you is useless to you and injurious to me, I should have stayed.—He proceeded to apologize and I was satisfied. When he had departed I went to a place in the mosque called the Cupola of Khālid and sat there and prayed, while Asad remained where he was and sent home for his breakfast. I did the same, and when our breakfasts were brought, he came and asked me to breakfast with him. His cloth was laid and his table spread, and he kept urging me to join him, which I at first refused to do, but when he adjured me, I who was acquainted with his meanness, said to my slaves : Remove our food and bestow it in alms on the people outside the mosque ; and when this had been done, I went and ate with him

heartily like a fasting man, while his colour changed, though he could say nothing, albeit deeply distressed. For fifteen days of Rama*d*ān we stuck to one another, (**246**) until he produced the money ; all the time I was sharing his meals in the style I have described. After we had parted, and a few days after the feast he sickened and died. I said : We are God's ; I hope that my treatment of him may not have been the cause of his dying of chagrin.

I was told by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Yūsuf al-Azraq as follows :—I was informed, he said, by Abu'l-Qāsim 'Alī b. al-Akhzar, a famous grammarian, and besides a man of honour, who would not in my opinion stoop to falsehood, that he, when on pilgrimage, had visited *T*āhir b. Ya*h*yā the 'Alawid to pay him his respects. While I was there, he said, there came a man who proceeded to kiss him on the head and hands, and began to apologize. *T*āhir told him not to apologize, for, he said, my grudge against you has departed, and if you like I will tell you why you have come to me and why I excuse you before you tell me.—The man, amazed, requested him to do so. He said : You have seen the Prophet in a dream, reproaching you for omitting your customary visits to me during pilgrimage, when you entered Medinah; for indeed for several years you have left me out, coming to Medinah without paying me a call. You replied that shame had kept you away, for that you were not sure whether I would accept an apology. He said to you : I will command *T*āhir to accept your apology. Fear not my son, rather befriend him. Hence your coming to me.—The man said : By Allah this was so, but how could you know it ?—He said : the Prophet came to me in my sleep and gave me a full account of what had passed between you.

Abu'l-*H*asan told me also the following. There was, he said, at the Damascus Gate a man named Labīb the Devout, a pious ascetic. He had been, he told me, a

Greek slave, whom his master had manumitted at his death. I then, he said, acquired a stipend as foot-guard, and married my mistress, my master's widow (**247**) (God knows, only for the purpose of protecting her), and I lived with her for a time. Then one day I saw a snake about to enter her apartment, and it turned on me and bit my hand, causing it to dry up ; after a little the other hand also dried up ; presently my feet became paralysed one after the other, then I became blind and then dumb. For a year I remained in this condition without a sound organ in my body except my hearing, with which I heard what I disliked. I was lying on my back, unable to make sign or indication, whence drink was given me when I was not thirsty and not given me when I was, and likewise with food ; I could not help myself, nor make any intelligible sign. After a year a woman came to see my wife and asked her how Labīb was ; and she replied in in my hearing : Neither alive so that there could be hope for him, nor dead so that he might be forgotten.—This grieved me and I wept and I secretly importuned God. Now the whole of that time I had not felt any pain in my body, but that day my whole body began to throb in a way that I cannot describe, and I felt great pain. At night, however, this began to be allayed, and I slept. I woke to find my hand on my chest, which surprised me ; how, I wondered, could it have got there ? I kept thinking about this, and at last I said ; Perhaps God has given me my health ! So I moved it and found that it moved, to my delight ; I now felt a great hope of health, and saying : Perhaps God has granted my recovery !—I drew up one of my feet which could be drawn up, I found, and which I also was able to stretch out ; then I tried the same with the other and found it move. Then I rose erect and was conscious of no defect, descended from the bed whereon I had been prostrate, went into the court, and raising my eyes saw the stars and found that I could see ; then my tongue was loosed, and I said :

O ancient Benefactor with thy ancient loving-kindness !—Then I called my wife, and she said : Abū 'Alī ! I said : (**248**) Only now have I become Abū 'Alī. Then I reposed and asked for scissors, with which I proceeded to cut off my military moustache. She, shocked at this proceeding, asked what I meant by that ; I replied that hereafter I meant to serve no one but my Lord.—This was the occasion of my asceticism.—My informant adds that the man's story was widely circulated, and that he became famous. The phrase quoted became habitual with him, he rarely said anything as an expletive or during most of his time but *O ancient Benefactor.* His prayers were thought to be effective, and people said that he had seen the Prophet who had stroked his hand. I asked him about this, and he told me the story which I have given, denying that his recovery had any other cause. He went on to say that he possessed a field on the bank of the Tigris at Madā'in, on which were hillocks and the like which required to be removed, and used to fill up other places in it. The task required a number of men. Once, he said, I was there on a moonlit night and was told about this. I asked them if they were prepared to clear the field that night and level the hillocks, and take a certain sum for doing this. They said : Yes, give us our wages. They did the work and when it was morning the field was quite level. The populace asserted that the angels had done the improvement, but they were mistaken ; it was only what I said.

I was informed by Abu'l-*H*asan Mohammed b. 'Ubaid the qā*d*ī as follows. I was taken, he said, by *H*usain b. Man*s*ūr *H*allāj, as companion, who at that time was in the mosque of Basrah, practising devotion, *S*ūfism and teaching the Koran, before he made those foolish pretensions, and involved himself in trouble. He was at the time playing an honest part, except that the *S*ūfīs ascribed miracles to him, only of the *S*ūfī style, and such as they call " assistances," not of the style associated with

his system. One day my uncle started a conversation with him, when I was a lad sitting with them and hearing what went on. He told my uncle that he had made up his mind to quit Basrah. My uncle asked him why. He said : The people of this city are telling stories about me, (**349**) and I am tired of it and wish to be at a distance from them. What sort of stories ? asked my uncle. They see me do certain things, he said, and do not ask me about them or make inquiries, which would have shown them that they are not as they fancy, and then go out and say that *H*allāj's prayers are effective and that *assistances* are accomplished at his hands and *mercies*, and who am I that this should befall me ? For example a few days ago a man brought me some dirhems, telling me to expend them on the poor. At that time there was no one there, so I put them under one of the mats of the mosque, by the side of a pillar which I marked. I waited a long time and as no one came, I went home to pass the night. The next morning I came to the pillar, sat down and prayed ; I was surrounded by a number of *S*ūfīs, and stopped my prayer, took up the mat, and gave them the dirhems. They started the rumour that if I struck the dust with my hand it turns into dirhems.—He began to enumerate various things of this sort, until my uncle rose and bade him farewell, and never returned. That man, he said, is a deceiver, and we shall hear of him again. Not long after he left Basrah, and his true character with the stories about him came to light.

I was told the following by Abu'l-*H*asan A*h*mad b. Yūsuf Tanūkhī. I was informed, he said, by Abu 'Alī Ibn al-A'rābī the poet that he had once been at a party given by Ja*h*zah. After we had eaten, he said, we sat drinking, while he sang. A man came in, to whom Ja*h*zah presented a hamper which he had packed with the food while we were eating ; he was stingy with food. The man appeared to have been fasting for a week, for he consumed the contents of the hamper and his plate

was empty when he removed it. Ja*hz*ah was looking on with anger while we gazed at him with amusement. When he had finished, Ja*hz*ah asked him whether he played backgammon, and when he said he did, we placed the board (**250**) between them, and they began to play. The play went continuously against Ja*hz*ah, as the dice regularly gave the man the numbers which he wanted. Finally Ja*hz*ah raised his head heavenward from his canvas tent, and said, addressing the Deity: I deserve this for satisfying one whom Thou didst make hungry.

He also told me the following which he had heard from some of the sheikhs of the place. There was a *mueddhin* who was on bad terms with the Censor. Summoned by the latter he asked what had occurred which rendered the summons necessary. The Censor said: I want you to tell me the time of prayer. If you know it, well and good; if you do not, I shall not permit you to summon people to prayer at improper times. Finding the man unable to pass his examination therein he prohibited him from acting as *mueddhin*.

He also told me the following: I was informed, he said by several people that Ibn Duraid used to tell this story. My teacher, he said, was Abū 'Uthmān Ashnāndānī, whereas my uncle *H*usain b. Duraid was in charge of my education, and when he wished to have a meal, he used to invite Abū 'Uthmān to share it with him. One day my uncle came in when this person was repeating to me the poem of *H*ārith b. *H*ilizzah, which commences *Asmā announces her departure*, My uncle promised to me a present if I learned the poem by heart. He then invited the teacher to dine with him, and the teacher went to his room, where the two had their meal and sat for a time afterwards. By the time the teacher left the room I had committed to memory the whole *diwan* of this poet, so when he came out I told him this; he was incredulous, and began to test me, but found that I had really committed it to memory. He went and told my

uncle who gave me what he had promised. Abu Bakr Ibn Duraid had indeed an extraordinary memory; most or all the Arabic *diwans* used to be read out to him by pupils, and in all cases he could repeat them from memory faster (**251**) than they could be read. I never witnessed an exception to this.

I was told the following by Abu'l-*H*asan: Once, he said, when Barbahārī was mentioned in the presence of Abū Mohammed Sulaimānī Hāshimī, known as 'Abbād, I heard the latter say: One day when he was standing before Qāhir, he said *Commander of the Faithful, ahlik* the Hashimites. The Caliph thought he meant " destroy," and said he would do so; but what he meant was *ahluk* " your people are," etc.

I was told by Abu'l-Faraj Babbaghā that when Saif al-daulah conducted the ransoming on the bank of the Euphrates in Rejeb of the year 355 (began June 23, 966 A.D.) it cost him half a million dinars for the redemption of the captives and the sums which he bestowed on them with the view of setting them up. All this he furnished out of his means, as an act of endurance and piety, and for the sake of glory and future reward. He received no assistance from any other monarch or any one else. This act was the seal on a series of deeds of beneficence and nobility which defy description and exceed enumeration. When he had finished, he commanded all the writers present at the time to compose each of them a letter in his name to the soldiers and the rest of the population of the various countries, describing the accomplishment of the ransoming and the mode wherein it took place. I wrote the following:

This letter—God take you under his protection, and guard us among you with his watchful eye—is from our camp Ma'qulah on the bank of the Euphrates, written after our completion of the redemption of the captives, the glorious work which God privileged us to perform, helping us to bear the heavy burden thereof, choosing us to support its weight,

and enabling us (**252**) *to monopolize the honour thereof, after other men's minds had been sunk in sloth and followed the counsels of avarice and the allurements of ease, and been harbouring vain fancies about God. Praise be to God, praise, by sincerity wherein we perpetuate the supply of His favours, and His favour be on our lord Mohammed and his family. Whereas the favours of God towards us are too great for any praise however long, and incapable of compensation, it seemed to us that acknowledgment of what we have already received and allusion to those which we await are the best way to increase and the surest means of guarding them. Ever since, thank God, we were acquainted with the task to which we have been called, and the privilege which has been conferred upon us of conducting the sacred war and devoting ourselves to fighting the foe, we have been harbouring plans whose success is guaranteed by the divine favour, and resolves resistance whereunto is frustrated by fortune, thoughts of victory whose results will be common to Islam, and prowess to be the talk of the ages. We quit resolution only for realization, and think only in order to accomplish. We reckon as money only what we spend, and rejoice not in our hoards save in exhausting them, in defence of the nation and the protection of the religion, the spread of justice and the reunion of the scattered; until we have taken captive and enslaved their kings, and made prisoners of their offspring by our victorious forces, estranged titles from their owners, and cleared the fortresses from their masters, We have bereaved their emperor of his brother-in-law and his nephew, and of his brother, to his despite and humiliation. Now when we had made truth take the place of error, and had restored it to might and honour, our swords retired from their blood to the sheaths and came up from in lieu of going down to their drinking-place. Our spears let drop their points, and our steeds obeyed their reins. Our enemies entreated of us a truce and made humble supplication unto us. They commenced by asking us for that redemption of captives which we durst*

not decline, nor find any excuse for refusing. So after "executing slaughter on earth" [1] *we thought that to redeem those monotheists who were* (**253**) *in their hands, and those Moslems who were their slaves, was the best mode of earning present thanks and the surest guarantee for the reward that is everlasting. So we sent our friends to all the cities to count the captives and remove them, to bestow favours upon them and to purchase them, from our own wealth and our private exchequer. We suffered none of our contemporaries to help us save in the matter of clothing, wherein indeed we did permit them to share our glory and our merit. These then have been added by us to those whom we have made our property by the law of the spear, and won by the strength of our steeds and of our blades, the great patricians, the noble chieftains, the captains of the Gentiles, and the magnates of the unclean. The kings and Sultans who were before us when they made treaties and arranged for the redemption of captives always looked to the other princes and to subject potentates, and wealthy subjects to help them with contributions of money ; but God has willed that we should monopolize the reward, the glory and the gratitude. We have commanded the captains of our troops and the most trustworthy of our servants to convey them with every attention and care according to the command which we have received to deal kindly with prisoners and captives, so that all have been brought across the Euphrates from the point whither their master asked leave to drag himself, and desired that he should alight ; where the difficult paths give a feeling of security, and he took care not to quit the fortress-like mountains. And when our neighbourhood made it necessary for him to move speedily, and our approach compelled him to execute the business which had been arranged, he advanced with doubtful steps and suspicious of the consequences of his plan and his resolve, with hosts whose thoughts were distracted by despair, and hearts*

[1] Sûrah viii. 68.

whose desires were tossed by terror. Their thoughts were troubled by anxiety, and their forces were subject to the commands of cowardice. Every cry they heard was, they thought, " the enemy, beware ! " **(254)** *until he alighted in our court surrendering the keys of authority, and receiving the surest pledge of fidelity from us. We commenced the redemption on the first day of Rejeb* (*June* 23, 966) *the gem of the sacred months ; and God has let the Moslems know of what pious and goodly works we made it the depository. Blessings came speedily and boons supported each other, and we continued to be perfectly guided and successful in our efforts, with our power expanded, our intellect all-embracing, our authority recognized, and our demonstration clear. The word of God is uppermost and the word of the Unbelievers undermost, and God is mighty and wise.—Thus did affairs continue in the most complete order and the best harmony until God rescued through us those whom length of captivity was near leading astray, and despair of deliverance near destroying. These persons are now as firm as we have ever known them in faith, and as secure as ever in religion. And those famous patricians and notable captains for whom we accepted ransoms quitted us with bodies that migrated while their souls abode, turning back with longing to that bountiful kindness of ours which they left behind, and that kindly condescension to which they were accustomed ; though ransomed, they are tied in the bonds of our beneficence, and though delivered, they are yet fettered by and slaves to the obligations laid upon them by our clemency. And when they brought unto us those whom they had taken captive from distant provinces and far off lands, we chose not to hoard our wealth rather than to deliver them, nor to save it up rather than to hasten their release, so we redeemed them at the very highest price and the heaviest sums, and we did not by the hoarding of gold and silver to which is attached a terrible menace give ear to any doubt about the profit of the bargain that is made by him who trades with God ; confident in a substitute in the near future and a reward hereafter.*

And that is the mighty prize. *Moreover we remedied what was out of repair in their condition by reason of the poverty which they had endured, and what was in disorder owing to the prolongation of their captivity, and we returned with the most auspicious return, the most abundant profit, the most complete* (**255**) *success and the finest state. For the enemy had decamped* (*God abandon him* !) *wearied with the length of his stay, and doubting the prospect of safety, suspicious lest the horses might pursue him and the spears overtake him. He could take no thought for the sickly in his rear, nor for the most precious in his company. We have commanded that despatches be sent to our friends and to all our subjects to tell them what manifest favours God has prepared for us, and what continuous fortune, that they may proclaim this on the pulpits and advertise it by letters and correspondence, inasmuch as the successive gifts and favours conferred by God Almighty redound on the whole community and their benefit is common to the nation. Praise then be to God who has selected us of His free choice and privileged us with the function whereof He thought us worthy, that is to protect the subjects of His Prophet as his vicegerent. We pray that He may help us to acknowledge His favours, in such wise that His mercies may be secured and His gifts guarded, not diminished by ingratitude nor withdrawn owing to offence, please God.*

The following was told me by my father after Mu'wajj. The horse of Badr *H*ammāmi had stumbled and brought him down, in consequence of which he had to be bled. I recited to him some verses which I had composed on the occasion :

No fault of the steed if his leg came to stumble :
And no one in this case with justice could grumble.
Personified gallantry, bounty and force
Are too great a load for the back of a horse.
When told you were bled all the virtues turned pale ;
Not a soul at the news but with terror did quail.
Good leech, keep your hand off the hand which you kiss,
Which lavishes fees you might otherwise miss.

Badr ordered the sum of five thousand dirhems to be paid me. I took them and departed. I had myself fallen off a mule, and an ode was composed on the subject by Abu'l-Qāsim 'Ubaidallah; he recited to me the following lines from it:

(**256**) What, load with your glories the foal of an ass,
Too kindly the charger to charge with the mass!
Poor mule made to bear jurisprudence and law:
Mount Ra*d*wa so loaded would sink to the floor.
The Law would, of course, sink the feet of the hack
Deep down, and Theology break its poor back.
What creature could hold up a mountain so grave,
Or carry an ocean with full tidal wave?
A full moon, your brightness the fall did not spoil:
Like rain your descent only freshened the soil.
Alighting erect you received, safe and sound,
Warm kisses on knees, feet and shoes from the ground.
Hereon we congratulate Mosque and Qur'ān,
Bench, judgments, pens, court, the whole duty of man.

Abi'l-Qāsim 'Ubaidallāh b. Mohammed *S*arūrī recited to me the following verses, which describe a machine for launching naphtha:[1]

Yellow creature, in whose mouth there is spittle of the same hue: when she discharges it, it races with the wind in sport.
As it issues from her inside it is wrapped in a cloak of darkness which becomes like a fortress for it.
She has a tail that has a tail of its own at its head; when it is dropped out of her, it is thrust back into her.
It spurts out lightnings between two nights of entrails to the mouth of a viper within which you see no teeth.
She plunges naked into the fray to frighten it; were she asked, she would acknowledge neither fear nor security.

He recited to me the following verses of his own:

And she handed me at the bottom of the cup some
Leavings, saffron yellow, while the cup was white.
Like a narcissus in the garden, gazing with eyes
Of gold whereof the lids were silvered.

[1] This description is so interesting archaeologically that it seemed best to translate it literally.

He also recited the following on the subject of a jug and a cupbearer :

There appeared before us the jug in the hand of a fawn, with a cheek which ever reddened at our gaze,
Like a maiden who when gazed at stretches out one hand to shield her face, and the other to replace her sleeve upon her heart.
(257) His locks hung down over his cheeks, wherein the gazelles might seem to have sown their eyelids and their tongues.

He further recited to me the following description in verse of a pock-marked girl :

Slender stem above a sand-heap, for loving whom I listen to no censure.
Whose glances languish without sickness, and inebriate themselves intoxicate the sober with their amorousness.
Pock-marked, having exchanged ruddiness with a hue of yellow on conspicuous lips.
You would think those cheeks had about them bubbles such as play in the wine after dilution.

The following also by himself about a brazier :

The blazing of our brazier might seem to be the thickening of bastard-saffron blossom.
Its extinguishing produced a blueness which played over a red mass.
Like a pool of wine on whose banks were remains of water-lilies unfolding.

The following also by himself about a brazier :

Look at our brazier laughing without mirth.
Like the pink of the dawn, ringed with a rainbow.

I was told the following by Abu'l-Faraj Babbaghā. I was, he said, in the presence of Abu'l-'Ashā'ir Ibn *H*amdān, when he had in front of him a brazier containing charcoal wherein fire had been made ; I straightway composed and recited to him the following ode :

Think of an assembly wherein those that sit find themselves on the summit of all glory !
It was evening, and the brazier therein furnished the best solace to our souls and bodies.
It displayed to us tongues like those of snakes, some steady, some flickering.

When the coal appeared therein black as night, yet diffusing sparks like torches.

(258) With the hue of flame spreading a yellow tint like that of yellow anemones.

Methought the noon-day sun was being eclipsed before us in an arch of black beads.

He also recited to me the following ode by himself on the candle :

Yellow creatures, with figures like spear-points standing on the top of copper chairs ;

Clad in mantles made of the setting sun, with yellow shawls gleaming in the darkness.

Brides unveiled by the darkness for their death-day yet living only when they shed golden tears.

When they throw their necks into the placidity of darkness they lend it robes of light like dawn.

They weep over their entrails with their bodies, and their bodies ever distil in tears.

They are topped by a blaze which deals with their existence as the days effect the shortening of life.

More than one person has recited to me the following verses of Sarī b. A*h*mad al-Raffā, recited by him to them :

Oh the amorous one who gazes with the eye of a gazelle ; the bearded one who goes wrong about her is excusable.

Over the rose of her cheek she has a mole, like a dot of ambergris amid the ruddy roses.

I was informed by several of my contemporaries among the *virtuosi* of Baghdad how Abu'l-*H*asan Mohammed b. 'Abdallāh b. Sukkarah when he visited the Judge of Judges Abu'l-Sā'ib 'Utbah b. 'Ubaidallāh, as he was seated at the judgment-seat, wrote a note in the form of a petition and presented it to him. He had previously composed a eulogy on this dignitary, but the fee had been delayed. When Abu'l-Sā'ib read the note, his face displayed neither irritation nor disdain ; he wrote something thereon with his pen, and asked where the person who had sent in that petition was. Ibn Sukkarah rose, and the judge handed it to him ; he took it, imagining that

it contained some promise of fee or reward which would restrain his tongue from assailing the Judge. When he read it, however, he blushed and went off. The note was afterwards read by others and found to contain sentences in Ibn Sukkarah's hand in verse, and the replies in the Judge's hand in prose, as they are copied below :

O 'Utbah, thou son of 'Ubaid,
God save thee from all that may shame ;

(Here I am, abbreviator [1] ; may God save you, too, from all hurt.)

And keep far away from thee folk
Who slander in secret thy name.
They told me that thou dost adore
Zabībah the son of Shu'aib ;

(They lied.)

I answered, absurd ! At his age
No heart can such passion imbibe.

(I am exceedingly obliged to you ; you have said what suits your case ; yet it does occur sometimes.

You should not calumniate thus
A man who is most virtuous.

(A dirty trick of theirs indeed ; and thank God for it.)

I was told the following by Abu'l-Faraj Babbaghā : Some delay had occurred in the matter of the clothing regularly sent me by the Prince Saif al-daulah, who liked, enjoyed, and appreciated nothing better than to be asked, when he would give, then to be asked for more, when he would give more, and indeed to be pestered with demands. It was even his habit to put something away behind his back which he meant to give some person. He would then say : I want to give this to So-and-so, and an attendant would go and fetch the man, who was told that he was to have an audience. When the man presented himself Saif al-daulah would give him nothing ; the man would say to him : What is there behind his majesty's cushion ?—Saif -al-daulah would ask what

[1] He wrote 'Ubaid for 'Ubaidallah.

business it was of his. The man would say: I am quite sure his majesty has set it aside for me. Saif al-daulah would deny it, and the man affirm it, and seize it when Saif al-daulah would try to pull it away. If this were done, Saif al-daulah would ultimately give it the man and add some further *douceur*.—So, said Babbaghā, I wrote to him, importuning him to send the clothes as usual:

"It is a sign of the courage of the hopeful (God prolong the life of our lord the Prince Saif al-daulah) if he is satisfied with the person on whom his hopes are set; and the worth of the importunate is to be gauged by the place which the importuned occupies in his mind. For very different are the degrees and the gradations of men in their assumption of munificence and their cultivation of ambition. Loftiness of morality is to be found in loftiness of pursuit.

(260) The glory craved by Saif al-daulah's soul
Surpasses calculation and control.
His bounty to my hopes I guaranteed;
He sent them joyful home, from wandering freed.
Once I had felt his goodness, I no more
Needed to haunt the grudging miser's store.
The rain is jealous of his lavish stream;
Fate sees with envy my fulfillėd dream.

Now my knowledge—God aid him—that I am the nearest to him of his suppliants, the one with the strongest claim, the greediest for an increase of his favours, and the most importunate in soliciting his bounty, has encouraged me to approach his heart with a request and to address his munificence in the language of hope:

If every one knows the position assigned
The slave in his master's affection and mind,
Evinced by the robes of distinction he wears
Discomfiture bringing thereby to his peers;
How strange that his grant is withheld, when the same
Who orders, is advocate too for the claim.

May he see to this, please God!"

I was told by Abu'l-*H*usain A*h*mad b. Mohammed b. Ja'lan that the following had been narrated to him by Abū 'Alī A*h*mad b. *H*usain b. 'Abdallāh the Jeweller son of the dealer in gypsum, after his father. The beginning, he said, of my fortune was one day when I was in the vestibule of the private apartments of Abu'l-Jaish Khumarāwaihi b. A*h*mad b. *T*ūlūn, where I was agent for him and his family for the purchase of jewels and other necessaries. As one attached to their service I rarely quitted the vestibule. That day there came out a stewardess with a necklace of gems to the number of two hundred, as beautiful and as costly as any I had ever seen ; I valued each gem at a thousand dinars. She told me that they wanted them to be cut so as to be reduced in size and serve for four rows of ten dolls. I was in ecstasies and took them, promising to obey her order. I hurried out at once in my delight and straightway collected (**261**) the dealers and purchased as many gems as I could until I had got together a hundred gems which matched and were of the size which she required. In the evening I went to her and told her that to cut them all would take time and involve delay ; but, I said, I have cut as many as I could to-day, and here they are. I gave her the collection, stating that the rest would be cut in a few days. She was satisfied with this and was pleased with the gems. Leaving her, I continued for some days to search for the remainder, and when I had got it together I had brought them in all two hundred gems which cost me a moderate sum, say less than a hundred thousand dirhems, whereas I had acquired jewels worth two hundred thousand dinars. Then I remained in their vestibule and adopted as my dwelling a chamber that was there. Thereby I obtained innumerable riches, and indeed my wealth became famous.

I was told the following by Abu'l-Husain Ibn 'Ayyāsh : I heard, he said, our sheikhs recount how the connexion of Ibn al-Jas*s*ā*s* with Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn *T*ūlūn (Khum-

ārawaihi) began as follows. At his drinking-bouts the prince was in the habit of drinking forty *ratls* of the Egyptian wine known as *Shīrawī*, and, he said, one who can drink one *ratl* of that can drink many of any other wine. None of his boon-companions could stand this, and they used all to get intoxicated before him, which he disliked, as he was left alone. He made a search therefore for hard drinkers and Ibn al-Jassās was mentioned, he being at that time a jeweller. He was summoned by the prince and on admission kissed the ground before the prince; the practice was not previously known, and Khumārawaihi was pleased with his courtesy. He asked him whose father he was, and he replied *of the prince's slave Husain*. This he said twice. The prince bade him eat with him and drink cup after cup, until the former was inebriated, whereas he drank a *ratl* after the prince had ceased. The prince, being told of this the next day, sent for him and made him a handsome present, and asked him what his trade was. Jewellery, he replied. The prince promised (**262**) that no jewels should be purchased for his household except through him. The prince became attached to him, and helped him to earn money; he was frequently at the prince's table, and when the latter wished to drink he drank with him, remaining awake while all the other boon-companions were asleep. This produced complete familiarity between them, and the prince in his cups would reveal his secrets and otherwise treat him as an intimate, referring to him his household affairs and the control of his expenditure. The jeweller steadily gained in favour, and when Khumārawaihi conceived the project of giving his daughter in marriage to Mu'tadid he sent him as commissioner; when he had succeeded in tying the knot, Khumārawaihi next entrusted him with the despatch of the bride, and he was able to ladle out money without count.

One of my friends, he adds, informed me that part of the trousseau of Qatr al-Nadā, daughter of Khumāra

waihi, was injured by rain on the way between Damascus and Ramlah, in consequence of which Ibn al-Jassās made the bride delay, and wrote to her father informing him of the fact and requesting permission to replace it. Permission being given, he delayed two months on account of this, and charged thirty thousand dinars for the renewal.

When Qatr al-Nadā, he adds, reached Baghdad, Khumārawaihi was in great straits, having impoverished himself to furnish his daughter's dowry, and indeed divested himself of his whole fortune. Once when he wanted a candle he could not get one for a time, until some device was arranged. He cursed Ibn al-Jassās for having secretly impoverished him.

A curious story, he added, about Ibn al-Jassās is the following. Muktafī wished to purchase of him a fine necklace of splendid gems, and to his question to what price the Caliph would go replied thirty thousand dinars. He informed the Caliph that he would not get what he wanted for that price, but that he had a necklace made up of sixty gems, which he would not sell for less than sixty thousand, and if the Caliph would go to that figure he would bring it. He brought it to the Caliph in whose presence 'Abbās b. al-Hasan was standing; Muktafī was dazzled by its size and beauty and declared that he had never seen its match. Whence could (**263**) *you* have such a thing, Abū Mishkāhil ? he asked. Muktafī was vexed and angry, and looked menacing, but 'Abbās signalled him to spare him, which he did; and Ibn al-Jassās thereupon left the necklace in the presence of the Caliph and went away. Muktafi said to 'Abbās: Are you unacquainted with this *kunyah* which the vulgar bestow upon me ?—He said: No, sire; but this is a vulgar fool, and the vulgar when they lord it over any one use this expression. And this phrase has won the necklace for you without price. Leave Ibn al-Jassās to me, and if he comes refer him to me.—After a few days he

came to remind Muktafī of the price of the necklace. He was told to deal with 'Abbās. He came to 'Abbās and demanded the money of him. 'Abbās said to him: What, do you demand the price of the necklace after the insulting language which you have used to the Caliph? After speaking to him in a style in which it would not be permissible to address one of his slaves? You had better not refer to this subject, or you will bring on yourself something which you do not want. Ibn al-Jassās kept quiet, and by this phrase he lost the necklace and the money.

I was told the following by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh: I was informed, he said, by a trustworthy person that when Ismā'īl b. Bulbul was attacked by *S*ā'id he stayed at home, and as he was expecting the birth of a child, he ordered an astrologer to be fetched to take his or her horoscope. An astrologer was fetched, but one of those present said: What, God help you, are you going to do with the stars? There is a Bedouin wizard here, more skilful than any in the world. He gave the name of the Bedouin, who was fetched. When he came, Ismā'īl asked him if he knew for what purpose he had been summoned. He said he did. What is the purpose? asked Ismā'īl. The man glanced about the apartment and then said: To ask me about a child that is expected. Ismā'īl, who had given orders that the man should not be told, was astonished and asked whether it was a boy or a girl. Again the man glanced round the apartment and replied: A boy. (**264**) Ismā'īl asked the astrologer what he thought of this. He said that it was ignorance. Just then a hornet flew on the head of Ismā'īl, which a slave flicked off, hitting and killing it. The Bedouin rose and said: By Allah you have killed the vizier, and are installed in his place; and I deserve a reward for announcing it.—He began to dance about and Ismā'īl tried to quiet him; just then a shout was heard announcing the birth, and Ismā'īl asked them to see the sex.

When they replied : A boy, he was delighted at the success of the conjurer and his promise of the vizierate for himself and the destruction of *S*ā'id. So he dismissed the Bedouin with a reward, and less than a month later Muwaffaq sent for Ismā'īl, invested him with the vizierate and put *S*ā'id into his power. Remembering the saying of the Bedouin, he sent for him and asked him to tell him how he came to say that on that day, seeing that he could have no knowledge of the future, and the matter was not one that was revealed in the stars. He said : All we do is to note omens, to watch the flight of birds, and to interpret what we see. You began by asking me why I had been summoned. As I glanced round the room I observed a water-cooler with pots attached to it; I thought to myself *something carried.* Then above the water-cooler I noticed a male sparrow ; so I thought *a male child.* Then the hornet flew upon you, and that is girt at the waist as the Christians are girt with the *zonarion ;* further it was an enemy which wanted to sting you ; now *S*ā'id is by origin a Christian and your enemy. I divined that the hornet meant your enemy, and as your slave killed it I divined that you would kill him.—Ismā'īl gave him a handsome present and dismissed him.

Abu'l-*H*usain further told us how he with Abū *T*āhir Ibn Nasr the qā*d*ī once was passing through Qā*d*ī-Street on their way to the residence of the chief qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*usain to visit him on the occasion of the illness of which he died, when they met three Bedouin riders. One of these raised his head, hearing a raven **(265)** croak over the wall of the chief qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*usain's residence. Turning to the two behind him he said : This raven announces to me the death of the master of that house ; one of these replied : Yes, he is to die after three days. The other said : Yes, and he will be buried in his residence.—I asked my compahion (said Abu'l-*H*usain) whether he had heard what the Bedouins were saying. He said Yes ; they are absolute fools.—We parted and

on the morning of the fourth day the death of the chief qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*usain was proclaimed, and I remembered with amazement the words of the Bedouin. We were present at the funeral and he was buried in his residence. I asked Abū *T*āhır whether he had ever experienced anything more extraordinary than the exact fulfilment of the Bedouin's prophecy, and what it could mean. He told me that he had not, and that he did not know; but, he said, let us come and inquire about them and ask them personally how they could know this. For some days we asked whereabout in the city they were quartered, without success; finally we were informed that they were residing in the quarters of the Banū Asad by the *H*arb Gate. We went thither and asked whether there were any clairvoyants among them. They said: Yes, three brothers at the extreme end of the tribe called Banu'l-'A'if (Sons of the Diviner).—They showed us their tents, and when we got there we found our three friends. They did not remember us, but we told them what we had heard them say and asked them about it. They said: We, like the other Arabs, are acquainted with a particular croak of the raven which it never utters over a place but the inhabitant of that place dies; this has been learned by experience in the desert through a long number of years, and the Bedouins cannot mistake it. We heard the raven on that occasion make that particular croak.—We asked the second how he came to say that the man would die after three days. He replied that the raven croaked three times in succession, and then was silent; then he began to croak again. We based our divination, he said, on this.—I asked the third how he knew that the man would be buried in his residence. He replied: I saw the raven digging into the wall with his beak and talons, and covering himself with the dust; hence I knew that the burial would be in the house.

The following was told us by Abu'l-*H*usain Ibn 'Ayyāsh: A friend of mine, he said, informed me that

one day he had gone out to (**266**) *H*ā'ir on pilgrimage, passing on his way by a place that was near a Bedouin encampment, he alighted and sat down to a meal with his slaves. One of the Bedouins stood up before him and requested some food. I told him to sit down until we had eaten, when we would give him a portion. Suddenly a raven flew by and croaked repeatedly. The Bedouin rose up and began to throw stones at the bird, calling out *Thou liest, O enemy of God, thou liest, O enemy of God!* We said to him : What is the matter, Bedouin ?—He replied : That raven is saying that you are about to kill me while meaning to feed me. I told him that his assertion was a lie.—We thought the man a fool, and finished our meal. Now on the table-cloth there was a large and sharp sandwich-knife which we forgot was there ; we rolled up the cloth with its contents and bade the Bedouin take it, finish what it contained, and return the cloth. He gathered it up, raised it and flung it violently on his back in his delight at our presenting him with the whole of its contents. The sharp point of the knife came through and stabbed him between the shoulders, so that he fell prostrate, crying out : Curse that raven, it spoke truly! I am a dead man by the Lord of the Ka'bah !—Fearing we might have trouble with the Bedouins, we left the cloth and made away hurriedly to mingle with the caravan that we might not be recognized, and left him weltering in his blood. We do not know whether he survived or died.

I was told the following by Abu'l-*H*usain : I was informed, he said, by Sulaimān b. *H*asan, that once when the subject of the Impostors was being discussed, the astrologer Abū Ma'shar said to him : I have seen a most extraordinary thing. A neighbour of mine at Sāmarra had been imprisoned, and his father, who was a friend of mine, came and asked me to ride with him to the chief of police to solicit the son's release. I mounted and on the way we passed by an impostor. I asked my com-

panion whether he would like us to get some amusement out of him, and when he assented, I said (**267**) to the man: Look at our star and see what it is and with what object we are going.—The man reflected a moment and then said: Your errand is in connexion with a prisoner.—Abū Ma'shar turned pale, was aghast and stammered. When I said to him: And will he be released or not?—He said: He has already been released while you are on the way.—Then said Abū Ma'shar to me: Let us be off; this is a mere coincidence, a delusion.—So we went on and came to the chief of police, and asked him about the man. He said: I assure you that only just now I received a letter from some one interceding for him, so I released him. Abū Ma'shar jumped up, in a hurry, saying: If I do not find out whence the Impostor got his true forecasts, I shall go mad, shall tear up my books, declare that astrology is vanity. Let us go back to him.—So we went back and found him in his place on the road. Abū Ma'shar bade him rise and come with us, so we gave him a mount and brought him to Abū Ma'shar's residence. He asked the man whether he knew him. He said No.—He told him that he was Abū Ma'shar. The impostor kissed his hand, saying: Our master, of whom I have heard.—Never mind that, said Abū Ma'shar; here are five golden dinars for you if you will tell me truly whence you obtained the forecast which you gave us.—The impostor said: I will tell you the truth, but will not venture to take anything from you, as you are the master of the craft. Know then that I know nothing about the stars, but I impose and talk nonsense to women, with this board before me; the astrolabe and the horoscope are for the delusion of the public. Only at a certain time in my life I accompanied the people of the desert and learned from them divination, augury, and the interpretation of omens. It is their theory that, when they are asked about anything, they should glance at the first object on which their eyes fall, and extract

thence a notion which they can apply to the matter about which they are asked, and about which they are to give a decision. When you asked me what your errand was, I hesitated, and my eye fell on a water-seller who had got water confined in his skin ; so I thought *some one in confinement.* (**268**) Then you asked me whether he would be released or not. I sought with my eye something to divine from and observed that the water-dealer had poured out some water which was issuing from his skin. So I said : While you are on the way he has been released. Was I right ?—Abū Ma'shar said to him : Yes, and you have relieved my mind besides.—He ordered his people to give him the dinars and dismiss him. The man at first refused to take the money, but Abū Ma'shar insisted until he yielded. He then flung himself down like one who has been released from a grave anxiety, and placing his hand upon his heart said : He has relieved my mind.

I was informed by Abū A*h*mad 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar b. *H*ārithī of the following, which was told him by his father. I was, he said, employed in the arsenal, and was standing in the presence of Muwaffaq in the army which he had collected to fight against the leader of the Zanj. There were also present Abū Ma'shar and another astrologer (whose name was given me, but I have forgotten it). He asked them to read the stars about a matter which had occupied his mind since the previous day, and about which he was asking them with a view of testing them ; you are, he said, to divine my thoughts.—They read the stars and made the calculation, and both told him that he was asking about an embryo, but not a human embryo. That is so, he said, but what sort of embryo ?—They thought for a long time, then they both said : That of a cow.—That is so, he said, and what will the cow bear ?—They both said : A bull-calf. How marked ? he asked.—Black, said Abū Ma'shar, with white on the forehead.—Black, said the other, with white on its tail.

Muwaffaq said : You shall see how bold these people are, and bade them bring the cow which was near parturition. He bade them slaughter it, and then cut it open. There was produced a black bull-calf the tip of whose tail was white, while the tail itself was curled over the brow. Muwaffaq, and those who were present were astounded, and he ordered a lavish reward to be paid the astrologers.

The following too, he said, was told him by his father. Once again, he said, I was in the presence of Muwaffaq, when he summoned Abu Ma'shar and the other astrologer, and said to them : I am concealing something about me, and what is it ?—After reading the stars and making calculations one said that it was a fruit, (**269**) whereas the other (Abū Ma'shar) said it was something animal. Muwaffaq told the first astrologer that he was right and Abū Ma'shar that he was wrong. He then threw an apple out of his hand. Abū Ma'shar stood on the spot and wondered, and studied the tables again for a time ; then he rushed towards the apple, took it and broke it open, calling out *Allāh is greater*. He then showed Muwaffaq that it was full of maggots. Muwaffaq was amazed by the correctness of his divination and ordered a handsome reward to be given him.

This story is far-fetched ; but I am satisfied with the examples that I myself have occasionally witnessed of skilful divination by the stars. Thus in the year when my father died he cast his own horoscope and told us that by the principles of astrology it was a critical year. He wrote a statement to that effect to his son-in-law the qā*d*ī Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn al Buhlūl in Baghdad, foretelling his own death and giving him some injunctions. When a slight ailment befell him, before it became dangerous, he in my presence produced his horoscope and studied it carefully, after which he closed it, shedding tears. He then summoned his secretary and dictated his last will and testament. He had it attested that same day. He was visited by the astrologer Abu'l-Ḳāsim " Saturn's

Slave," who began to comfort him, suggesting doubts; but my father said to him; Abu'l-Qāsim, you are not the man who could be deceived about a thing of this kind, nor a person whom I could credit with error; nor am I the person on whom this kind of consolation can be tried, or to be put off his guard by it. The astrologer sat down, and my father showed him the place which he feared. Then my father said to him: Enough of this; have we either of us any doubt that the afternoon of Wednesday the seventh from the end of the month is the critical hour according to them?—Abu'l-Qāsim was silent, being ashamed to say Yes before my father; so he (Abu'l-Qāsim "Saturn's Slave") said nothing, having been my father's servant. My father wept for a long time, then bade a slave bring a basin, and when this was brought he washed the horoscope in it, and then cut it in pieces. He then bade farewell to Abu'l-Qāsim in the style of one who is parting for ever; and when the afternoon of that day came, he died, as he had said.

(270) I was informed by more than one of our friends that Abū Mohammed 'Abdallāh b. 'Abbās of Rāmhurmuz the metaphysician told him how when he intended leaving Abū 'Alī Jubbā'ī to go to his own city, and went to bid him farewell, he said: Abū Mohammed, do not start to-day, for the astrologers assert that whoever travels on such a day will be drowned. Wait until such and such a day, for that is lucky according to them. I replied (said 'Abdallāh): Sheikh, do you talk in this way, holding the views that you do about their assertions?—He said: Abū Mohammed, suppose we were on a road and someone told us there was a lion on it, would it not be a matter of prudence to avoid travelling by that road, if we could take another, even though our informant might be saying what was false?—I agreed. Then, he said, it is possible that God may have so arranged the sequences of events that when the stars are in certain positions particular things occur. It is wise then to be on the safe side.—

So, he said, I put off my journey to the day which he had named.

Abu'l-*H*usain al-Azraq told me what had been stated to him by Abū Hāshim the Baker. Abu 'Ali Jubbā'ī, he said, was a most skilful astrologer. Once when a child was born in his neighbourhood, its father requested him to make out its horoscope. It was nighttime, and Abū 'Alī took his astrolabe, made out the horoscope and foretold a number of things, all of which afterwards happened to the child.

Once in my father's presence the conversation turned on stinginess and the stingy, and the liability of sovereigns to this quality. Abu'l-*H*asan Mu*t*ahhar b. Ishāq b. Yūsuf was present, and he narrated how one day he had visited Abū 'Abdallāh Barīdī when his table was laid. He bade me to it, he said, and, as I was hungry, I ate voraciously. A hot roast kid was brought, and I flung my hand on its shoulder, which I devoured. Then came other dishes and (**271**) a cold kid, to which I did the same. Then came other dishes and a spiced kid, and I did the same to it. Then came a kid with salt and water, and I was about to take the shoulder, but was anticipated by the hand of Abū 'Abdallāh, in consequence of which I withdrew mine. He said to me : Abu'l-*H*asan you are the modern " Sābūr of the Shoulders ! "—I was very much ashamed, knowing that he said this out of annoyance. After that I avoided eating at his table.

(*It appears that owing to the loss of a leaf or the error of a scribe the story breaks off, and we are taken into the middle of another.*)

My father said : It is not within my means, and I shall be disgraced. Not knowing what to do, I consulted one of his intimate associates, who told me that he was anxious to do me an injury, and that nothing but money would avail me with him. I asked him to think of a device or means of cajoling him. He said I know of one remedy only, if you can induce yourself to adopt it and

abandon your pride as a descendant of 'Alī, it will save you.—I asked what it was. He said : He is a man who is liberal with his food, and grateful to one who eats at his table, ready to acknowledge such a person's claims. My idea is that when his meal is prepared, you, being in custody in his house, should go out to him, for your guards will not prevent this, and without permission seat yourself at his table, and eat voraciously ; then, after the meal, talk to him about your business, making a civil and humble request, for he is sure to grant it in the main, and the relations between you will be improved. I did not relish this proposal, but when I reflected I found the payment of the money yet more disagreeable ; Abū Ja'far only had one meal in the day after sunset ; I abstained from food that day, waiting for his table to be laid ; when this was done, I rose. The guard asked me whither I was going ; when I replied *To the vizier's table,* he was unable to prevent me, and accompanied me. When Abu Ja'far saw me, he was surprised, and his face brightened ; he called out twice *hither, sir, by me.* He seated me at his side, and I began to eat and to talk freely, until the table was removed. Then Abū Ja'far rose and we all followed his example, and when the table had been cleared he summoned me to his place ; then, after I had washed my hands in his presence, when I was about to address him, he said : Abū 'Abdallāh, I have occasioned you annoyance by keeping you from your home, whither you had better return at once ; nor, after the compliment you have paid me, shall I say anything to you of what was in my mind or of what I intended to say to you.—I thanked him and said : If our master, whom God help, would think fit to culminate his favours by handing me the deed !—He bade his slaves bring it, and before I left the place, I had it in my shoe. I then returned to my house, being free of debt. I regularly waited on him after that and ate frequently at his table ; and while to the end of his life I maintained my attitude

of respect, my honour and property were guarded by him.

The following was told me by my teacher Mohammed b. al-Fa*d*l b. *H*umaid *S*aimarī: There was, he said, in our city a pious old dame, who constantly fasted and prayed; she had a son who was a money-changer, a confirmed toper and gambler, who used to spend most of his day in business at his shop, and would return home in the evening to deposit his purse with his mother, after which he would go and spend the night in some drinking establishnent. A thief once planned to get hold of his purse, and following him one evening entered the house behind him, and concealed himself there. The son, having handed his purse to his mother, went out, while she remained by herself in the dwelling. There she had a room of which the walls for the most part were panelled with teak, with an iron door, wherein she deposited all her goods and possessions, and the purse. That night she deposited the purse behind the door of this strong-room, and herself sat down in front of it and took her meal. The thief thought that when she had had her meal she would rest and fall asleep, and that would be the time for him to leave his hiding-place, open the door, and appropriate the purse and the goods. After the old dame had taken her meal, she rose to pray: and the thief supposed that after saying the evening prayer she would go to sleep. So he waited (**273**). Her prayer was so lengthy that the thief became impatient; midnight passed, and the situation continued embarrassing, for he was afraid he would be overtaken by morning without having secured anything. So he wandered about the house and found a new pair of pantaloons and then looked about for fuel and came upon something which had a fragrant scent; he put on the garment and lighted the incense, and then descended the stairs, uttering harsh sounds, which he made intentionally loud, with the view of frightening the old dame, who however was a Mu'tazilite of great courage, and perceived by the movement

that it was a thief, though she did not show that she had perceived this. In a voice which simulated alarm, she asked Who is it ?—He replied : I am the messenger of Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds ! He has sent me to this vicious son of thine to warn him and do unto him what shall restrain him from perpetrating his crimes.—Pretending to be overwhelmed and fainting with fright, she gasped : O Gabriel, I beseech thee by Allah, be gentle with him, for he is my only child ! The thief said : I have not been sent to slay him ! Then what wilt thou do, she asked ; what is thy errand ?—To take his purse, he replied, and so afflict his heart ; and when he has repented, I will return it to him.—Accomplish thy commission, O Gabriel, she said.—He bade her move away from the door of the strong-room, which she did ; he then opened the door and went inside, to take the purse and the goods. While he was engaged in packing them, the old dame advanced very gently and pulled the door sharply into its place, put the ring on the staple, and inserted the lock. The thief found himself looking death in the face, and after vainly trying to find in the strong-room some chink or crevice, called out to her : Open the door and let me out ; thy son has learned his lesson.—O Gabriel, she replied, I fear lest if I open the door my eyes may be blinded by glancing at thy brilliancy.—He said : I will extinguish my brightness so that thou shalt not be blinded.—She said : O Gabriel, inasmuch as thou art the messenger of the Almighty, (**274**) thou canst easily escape by the roof, or bore a hole in the wall with a feather of thy wing and so go forth ; impose not on me to risk my eyesight.—The thief perceiving the courage of the woman, began to supplicate and entreat, promising repentance. But she told him that it was no use, that he was to wait till it was day before he could be let out. So she recommenced her prayers, while he went on chattering and entreating, without receiving any reply. When it was morning her son returned, and having learned what

had happened, summoned the police ; the door of the strong-room was then opened and the thief arrested.

I have heard several of our colleagues say : One of the advantages of the Mu'tazils is that their lads are not afraid of the *jinn*. We were told of a thief entering the house of a Mu'tazil, who, observing his entrance, made a search for him ; the thief descended into a well that was inside the house, and when the owner took up a big stone to drop on him, called out *The night is ours and the day yours*, suggesting that he was one of the jinn. In that case, said the Mu'tazil, you must pay half the rent.—He then threw down the stone which bruised the thief. When, asked the thief, will your family be safe from the jinn ?—Never mind that, answered the Mu'tazil, you had better get out.—He got out and was allowed to depart.

I heard my father say that he went to Abu'l-Qāsim Ibn Bint Manī' to write traditions from his dictation, but was told by the people in his house that he had gone out on some business ; his age at the time was about a hundred. We sat and waited and presently he came in a litter, and flung himself down as though he had fainted. When he had recovered we asked him what the business was which had made him go out, and why he had not charged us with it. He replied that it was not a matter with which he could charge us. I went, he said, to the assembly of Madam Khā*t*if, and was greatly affected by her voice.—We were astonished at an aged traditionalist frequenting the assembly of a woman who sang to a stringed instrument. I have been told by a good authority that she is still alive and still sings to a stringed instrument, though she is seventy years of age. **(275)** (I have since been informed by Abu'l-*H*asan Ibn al-Azraq in the year 361 (began Oct. 24, 971 A.D.) that she died at her residence in his neighbourhood in this year.)

I was told by Abu'l-*T*ayyib Ibn Harthamah how he had heard the Traditionalist Bāghandī saying angrily to

a slave-girl who waited on him: *The time is passed wherein you used to paint with rouge;* and that is a Tradition connected with the text (*Surah lxxx.* 31) *and fruits and vegetation* "and fruits and me." [1]

I was told by a man who had travelled to distant regions—Abū Ghānim 'Abd al-Malik b. 'Alī Saqatī of Basrah—that once he was on one of the Yemen roads accompanied by a man who had a case containing head-gear. There was a shower of rain which wetted the hoods; so when they alighted the owner took them out of their case and spread them in the sun. A vast herd of apes that had been surrounding the caravan, on seeing the hoods which were at a little distance outside the camp, stood and gazed at them; presently one enormous ape led the way and put one of them on his head, and then the others followed suit until the hoods were exhausted. I noticed the owner beating his breast and crying: If these apes go off with these hoods, I am a ruined man; for I have no other property.—The people in the caravan bade him sit still and not molest the apes, and presently the great ape deposited the hood from his head, and departed, and the others did the like. The owner then rose and collected his hoods.

The same person told me that he had seen in the cities of Yemen a number of tame apes; an ape would for example go out of its owner's house with a basket and money, go to the baker's, butcher's (**276**) etc., indicate what it wanted, pay the price, and carry the goods home.

My father told me the following: There was he said, near us in the mountain by Antioch called Jabal Lukām an ascetic named Abū 'Abdallāh the Refuse-man, so called because at night he used to enter the town and go the round of the refuse-heaps, take anything which he could find there, wash it and eat it; this being his only

[1] The first story refers to a grammatical peculiarity; the second to the misreading of a letter.

means of subsistence, except that he would explore Jabal Lukām and eat any lawful fruits that were there. He was a pious man and an earnest student of Scripture, only he was of the *H*ashwī sect,[1] and not over-intelligent. He had a tremendous reputation among the people of Antioch, where there was also one Mūsā b. Zukūrī, a buffoon who wore long tresses and practised various follies, one of whose neighbours used to visit the Refuse-man. Between Ibn Zukūrī and this neighbour some trouble arose, so the latter complained of the former to the Refuse-man, who accordingly cursed him in his prayers. Every Friday morning the people used to pay a visit to the Refuse-man, who would talk to them and pray; when therefore they heard him curse Ibn Zukūrī, they trooped to the house of the latter with intent to kill him. He fled; whereupon they pillaged his house, and he was pursued by the mob. For a time he concealed himself; but when this became tedious, he said: I am going to devise a plan for getting rid of this Refuse-man, and you, he said to me, must help me.—I asked him what he wanted. Give me, he replied, a new garment, and some *nadd* and musk, with a censer and fire, further some slaves to keep me company to-night on the road to the mountain.—I gave him all he asked for, said my father, and at midnight he started towards the mountain accompanied by the slaves, and when they were above the cave wherein the Refuse-man dwelt he started burning the perfumes, and when the smoke began to enter the cave, he cried out with a loud voice *Abū 'Abdallāh Mazābilī*! When the Refuse-man smelt the incense and heard the voice, he was alarmed, and said: (**277**) What is the matter, God preserve you, and who are you?—Ibn Zukūrī replied: I am the Faithful Spirit, Gabriel, the messenger of the Lord of the Worlds, whom He has sent unto thee!—The Refuse-man, not doubting the veracity

[1] Who believed that the Qur'an contains unintelligible matter.

of the speaker, burst into tears, and said: O Gabriel, who am I that the Lord of the Worlds should send thee unto me?—He answered: The Merciful One salutes thee and saith unto thee that Mūsā Ibn Zukūrī is to be thy companion to-morrow in Paradise.—Abū 'Abdallāh was thunderstruck, and hearing the rustling of Ibn Zukūrī's robe as he went away, just saw its whiteness. Ibn Zukūrī left him and returned to his place of concealment, and the next day, which was a Friday, the Refuse-man told the people the story of the embassy of Gabriel and requested them to seek the favour of Ibn Zukūrī and ask him to pardon him. They accordingly trooped to Ibn Zukūrī's dwelling, and sought for him with the intention of obtaining his favour and imploring his pardon for the Refuse-man. Ibn Zukūrī then emerged from his refuge, and his life was secure.

The following was told me by Abu'l-*T*ayyib Ibn 'Abd al-Mu'min: An accomplished knight of industry went from Baghdad to *H*ims, accompanied by his wife, and when he had got to the latter place, he said to her: This is a foolish and wealthy town, and I wish to bring off a stunner (a phrase used by these people whereby they mean a great piece of knavery), for which I want your help and endurance.—She accorded it willingly. He told her she was to remain in her place and not pass by his at all, only each day to take two-thirds of a *ratl* of raisins and the same quantity of almond-paste, to knead them together and place it at midday on a clean tile in a certain lavatory near the mosque where he would find it. That was absolutely all she was to do, and she was not to approach his quarters. She agreed, and then he produced a tunic and breeches of wool which he had brought, and a veil to put over his head, and took up his station by a pillar in the mosque before which most of the people passed. Here he remained praying the whole day and the whole night, except at the times wherein prayer is forbidden, and when he sat down (**278**) to rest he kept

counting his beads and did not utter a word. For a time he was unnoticed ; then he began to attract attention, and he was watched for a space and talked about and observed ; it was found that he never ceased praying, and never tasted food. The people of the town were astonished at him, as he never left the mosque save once at midday, when he went to the lavatory and made his way to the marked tile whereon the paste was laid, which had changed colour and looked like dried and discoloured dung, which those who came in and out supposed it to be. This he would eat to support life, after which he would come back and drink as much water as he required, when he was washing for the nightly prayer and during the night. The people of *H*ims supposed that he tasted neither water nor food, and that he maintained a complete fast during the whole period ; and this they thought extraordinary, and admirable. Many approached him and addressed him, but he returned no answer ; when they surrounded him he took no notice, and however hard they tried to get him into conversation, he maintained silence and his line of conduct, so that he won their profound respect ; and indeed when he went for purification, they went to the place which he had been occupying and rubbed their hands thereon or carried away the dust from the places where he had walked ; and they brought to him the sick that he might lay his hands on them. When a year had passed in this performance, and he perceived what respect he had won, he had a meeting with his wife in the lavatory, where he told her on the following Friday when the people were praying, to come, seize hold of him, and smite him on the face, and say to him : You enemy of Allah, you scoundrel, after killing my son in Baghdad, have you come here to play the devotee ? May your face be smitten with your devotion !—You are not, he said, to let me go, but pretend that you want to slay me to avenge your son ; the people will gather against you, but I will see that they

do you no harm, as I shall admit that I have killed him, and pretend that I have come to this town to do penance, and practise devotion in order to expiate my offence. You are then to demand (279) that I be driven out of the mosque and brought to the magistrate for execution; the people will then offer to pay blood-money, but you are not to accept less than ten times the legal amount or what, from the eagerness with which they raise their bids, you gather that they are prepared to pay. When the bidding has reached a point beyond which they seem to you unlikely to go in their efforts to redeem my life, then accept the ransom, collect it and leave the town at once for the Baghdad road; I will escape and follow you.—The next day the woman came to the mosque, and when she saw him, she did what he had bidden her, buffeted him on the face and recited the speech which he had taught her. The people of the town rose up wishing to kill her, saying: Enemy of Allah, this is one of the chief saints, one of the maintainers of the world, the Pole of the time, the lord of the age, and so on.—He signalled to them to be patient and not to hurt her, shortened his prayer, said the benediction, then rolled for a long time on the ground, and then asked the people whether since he had been living among them they had heard him speak a word. They were delighted to hear his voice, and a loud cry of No! gave the answer to his question. He then said: The reason is that I have been living among you to do penance for the crime she mentioned; I was a man who erred and ruined himself murdering this woman's son; but I have repented and came here to practise devotion. I was thinking of going back to her and looking for her that she might demand my blood, fearing lest my penitence might not be true; and I have constantly been praying God to accept my penitence and put me into her power until at last my prayer has been answered, and it is a sign that God has accepted my prayer that he has brought us together and put it

into her power to obtain retaliation ; suffer her therefore to slay me and I commit you to the care of God.—Cries and lamentations then arose, and one after another implored him to pray for him. The woman advanced in front of him as he moved, walking slowly and deliberately to the door of the mosque, with the intention of going thence to the palace of the governor of the place, that the latter might order him to be exectued for the murder of her son. Then the sheikhs said : Citizens, why (**280**) have you forgotten to remedy this disaster and protect your country by the presence of this saint ? Deal gently with the woman and ask her to accept the blood-money, which we shall pay out of our purses.—The woman said : I refuse. —They said : Take twice the legal amount.—She said : One hair of my son's head is worth a thousand times the legal amount !—They went on bidding until they had reached ten times the amount ; then she said : Collect the money, and when I have seen it, if I feel that I can accept it and acquit the murderer, I will do so ; if not, then I shall slay the slayer.—They agreed to do this. Then said the man to her : Rise up, God bless you and take me back to my place in the mosque.—She declined and he said : As you will.—The congregation went on collecting money until they had got together a hundred thousand dirhems, which they asked her to accept. But she said : I will take nothing but the death of my son's murderer ; so deeply has it affected my soul !—Thereupon the people began to fling down their coats and cloaks and rings, the women their ornaments and every man some of his possessions, any one who was unable to bear part of the ransom being in a terrible state, and feeling like an outcast from society. At last she took what was offered, acquitted the man and went off. The man remained in the mosque a few days—long enough for her to get to a safe distance—and himself decamped one night. When he was sought the next day he could not be found nor was he heard of until a long time after when they discovered that the whole affair had been a plot,

I saw in Baghdad a one-eyed *S*ūfī, named Abu'l-Fa*t*h, who was chanting the Qur'an beautifully in a gathering arranged by Abū 'Abdallāh Ibn al-Buhlūl. A lad read the text (xxxv. 34) *Did we not give you length of life sufficient for a man to take warning in?* The *S*ūfī cried out *Aye, aye* many times and fainted, remaining unconscious during the whole of the meeting. He had not recovered when the congregation dispersed, the meeting having been held in the court of a house which I inhabited. I left him where he was, and he did not come to himself till about the afternoon, when he arose. After some days I inquired about him, and learned that he had been present in Karkh when a singing-woman was performing to the lute, (**281**) and heard her repeat the lines in which comes the passage

> The day when each man brings his plea,
> Thy blessed face shall plead for me.

This affected him so much that he shouted and beat his breast and at last fell down in a fit. When the entertainment was over they moved him and found that he was dead. He was taken away for burial and the affair got noised abroad. The verses whence this is taken are by 'Abd al-Samad b. al-Mu'adhdhal; they were dictated by *S*ūlī after him by a chain recorded in my records of traditions which I have heard; they were:

> Author of ways which fascinate,
> Thou art the sovereign of our fate.
> A house with thee for habitant
> Needeth not an illuminant.
> If e'er release from thy control
> I crave, may God not save my soul!
> The day when each man brings his plea,
> Thy blessed face shall plead for me.

I was informed by a number of sheikhs in Baghdad that there used to be at one end of the Bridge two blind beggars, one of whom used to appeal in the name of 'Alī and the other in that of Mu'āwiyah; these names aroused

the people's fanaticism, and brought a constant supply of coins. When the beggars went away they shared the spoil, for in reality they were partners, and their mode of appeal a plot.

I was told by Abū A*h*mad 'Abd al-Salām b. 'Umar b. *H*ārith that a *S*ūfī came to Bachkam when he was at Wāsi*t* and preached to him in both Persian and Arabic until he drew his tears. When the *S*ūfī was about to leave, Bachkam bade one of those present take with him a thousand dirhems and hand them to him, saying (**282**) to the people that he did not suppose the *S*ūfī would accept them ; for, said he, as the man is given up to the service of God, what can he do with the dirhems ?—Shortly after that the messenger returned empty-handed, and was asked by Bachkam what he had done. He replied that he had taken the dirhems and given them to the *S*ūfī. What, did he take them ? asked Bachkam. He did, replied the messenger. Bachkam bit his lip and said : I have been done. We are all of us hunters ; the difference is in the nets.

I was told by Abū 'Alī *H*asan b. A*h*mad of Anbār, the Clerk, the following which he had heard from a trader who was a great traveller : I travelled, he said, a long distance beyond the Caspian gates, with goods, and came to a land of which the inhabitants were white and red, without hair, thin, short and naked, with short nails, speaking a language that was unknown to me—neither Persian nor Turkish. In their country there was neither silver nor gold, the transactions being all in goods, chiefly sheep. I was brought before their king, to whom I showed my goods ; he admired a garment of spotted satin which I had, and asked the price. I offered it for a large sum ; he replied that he had no money, but that there were various goods, and if any of them suited me I might take them in exchange. I told him that they were unsuitable. Then he offered sheep. I asked how many he was prepared to give. He told me to make my

own terms. I said one ewe for each spot on the garment. He agreed. I began to count the spots but could not get the number right, and all those who were there tried and were equally unsuccessful. Then the king said: Let me try now; we are tired and have tired you out with a process which will not work. I was about to remove the garment, but was stayed by the interpreters, of whom there were two, one being addressed by the king in his own language, and then speaking to the other in another language, which the other translated into Persian, which I understood. So I spread out the garment and the king (**283**) ordered as many small pebbles as could be got to be brought; on each spot a pebble was placed, so that the garment was covered with them; the king then ordered a great number of sheep to be produced, and these were made to stand in his presence. He ordered some men to sit and others to stand; those who were seated on the garment lifted the stones, pebble by pebble, and each time one of these threw a pebble off the garment one of those who were standing took hold of a sheep and brought it to my quarters; where it was given to my servants. This went on until I had got a sheep for every pebble that was upon the garment.—I admired his sagacity and said to the interpreters: Tell the king that I shall take home nothing that is better than the recollection of his sagacity in solving this problem. And how did he come to think of this method, when he has no experience of business, whereas I, who am a tradesman, failed to think of it as did also all his subjects?—He was flattered by what I said, and replied: When you were about to go away, I was vexed at the thought of losing the garment, so I began to think; now sovereignty sharpens the brains of those who enjoy it, and they get a power of devising expedients for emergencies which others have not got: the reason being that their minds are free from the care for their maintenance which besets others, and can be devoted exclusively to the affairs of their

kingdoms, the suppression of rebellions, and the gratification of their passions to the extent which they choose. None of them obtains the sovereignty except in virtue of his nobility or some quality wherein he excels and surpasses others, such as the favour of fortune or some personal talent. Hence when I thought I was likely to lose the garment I exercised my brains for a means of counting the spots, and hit upon the expedient which you saw.—Sire, I replied, the profit which I have obtained from hearing your words is more welcome to me than what I have gained by the sale of the garment.—The king then bestowed on me a handsome gift, and sent people to escort and assist me on (**284**) my journey and convey the sheep until I was outside his territory, where I sold them for an enormous sum.

The following was told me by Abū 'Alī Anbārī: I was in the presence, he said, of Abu Yūsuf Zaidī, and wrote several letters. The day grew hot, and being fatigued I got up and took a walk in the great court of the mansion. There I met the Christian physician Yu*h*anna (John), who said to me: Abu 'Alī, you had better be bled at once, or you will catch the plague.—I told him that I had been bled only yesterday.—He told me to undo my drawers and pantaloons. I stopped and did so, when he said: Had your colour not taken a turn for the brighter, I should have bled you afresh.—I admired, he said, the man's skill in detecting the accumulation of blood in my face, and the speed wherewith he remedied it.

The same person told me the following story: One day Yu*h*anna came to my dwelling, and found me with a number of trays in front of me containing oranges. When he saw them, he asked how long I had had those dishes with me. I replied that I had had them for some days. He exclaimed: Good heavens! Order them to be removed at once, else I will not sit down to read with you.—So I ordered them to be removed. I proceeded

to ask the reason for this. He told me that it was a property of the orange to cause bleeding of the nose, and that person whose nose bleeds after continuous smelling of this fruit whether in consequence of such smelling or by accident, will go on bleeding at the nose till he dies, and there is no remedy for it.

Abu'l-Qāsim *S*ūrī recited to me the following lines of his own :

O day as hot as day of lovers' parting
  I spent upon a courser lean of flank !
On him in summer's wave like heart of lover
  Burning with separation's pain I sank.

THE END.



APPENDIX

P. 282 (271 of Arabic Text). *The beginning of this story is preserved by Yāqūt, Irshād al-Arīb, i. 401, and is as follows*: *the words* My father said *belong to what precedes.*

On the authority of Abu'l-'Abbās Ibn al-Munajjim: I heard Abu 'Abdallāh Mūsawī 'Alawī make the following statement: I was (he said) hard pressed by Abū Ja'far Mohammed b. Ya*h*yā b. Shīrzād during his ministry, who drew up an account of 100,000 dirhems due from me as land-tax, most of its actually due, and the remainder such as might be regarded as due. He summoned me for examination on the matter, and put me into confinement in his residence, where I was in great distress owing to what had befallen me, being well aware that the result of the examination would be to show that the money was due, and this would affect my position and I should be disgraced.

THE following extracts from the work quoted dealing with counting with the fingers will explain the passage on p. 56.

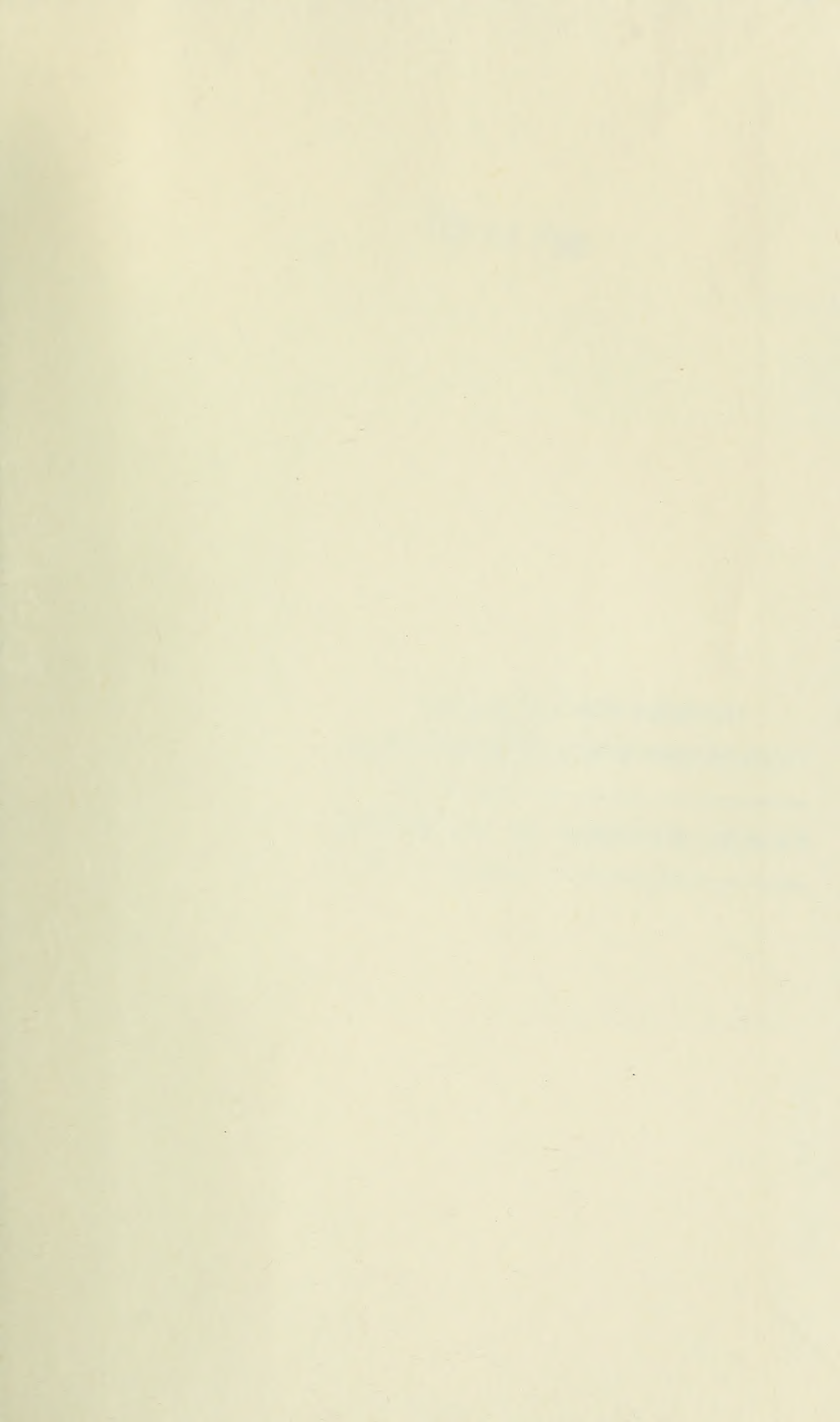
10 is expressed by placing the tip of the forefinger in the joint of the thumb; *the right hand only to be used for the numerals from* 10—90.
20 by placing the thumb between the bases of the forefinger and the middle finger.
30 by putting together the tips of the thumb and forefinger.
40 by placing the tip of the thumb at the middle joint of the forefinger.
50 by putting the tip of the thumb at the base of the forefinger.
60 by putting the tip of the forefinger on the tip of the thumb.
70 by placing the thumb under the forefinger.
80 by putting the tip of the thumb on the lowest joint of the forefinger.
90 by putting the tip of the forefinger well over the tip of the thumb.
100 the same as 10 *only with the left hand.*

Of the *coins* mentioned in this book the *dirhem* was of silver, the *dinar* of gold. The ratio between the two was very variable, and the value of the *dirhem*, which properly had about the value of a silver franc, was also uncertain. A *danaq* was the sixth part of a dirhem.

The measures of capacity, *kurr*, of areas *jarīb*, and of weight *mann* and *ratl* are doubtless used in this book according to their signification in Baghdad at the time. According to the contemporary work *Mafātīh al-'Ulūm* the *jarīb* was a space of 60 cubits square ; the *kurr* was 60 *qafīz*, and the *qafīz* 25 *ratl*. The *ratl* was half a *mann*, of which the weight is given as 257 drachms.

For most of the allusions reference may be made to Hughes's *Dictionary of Islam*. The following list of Caliphs may be useful :

al-Mansūr 754–775 A.D.
al-Mahdī 775–785.
al-Hādī 785–786.
Hārūn al-Rashīd 786–809.
al-Amīn 809–813.
al-Ma'mūn 813–833.
al-Mu'tasim 833–842.
al-Wāthiq 842–847.
al-Mutawakkil 847–861.
al-Mu'tamid 870–892.
al-Mu'tadid 892–902.
al-Muktafī 902–908.
al-Muqtadir 908–932.
al-Qāhir 932–934.
al-Rādī 934–940.






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